



Housing and Community Safety Committee

Tuesday, 06 September 2022

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **Housing and Community Safety Committee** is to be held at **Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Tuesday, 06 September 2022** at **14:00**.

BUSINESS

1. **Sederunt**
2. **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests ***
3. **Resolution**
Consider, and if so decide, adopt the following resolution:
"That under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for Items 12 and 13 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act."
4. **Minute of Meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Committee on 21 June 2022** 7 - 10
5. **Written Questions ****
6. **Housing and Property Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2022** 11 - 18
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance)
7. **Housing Investment 2022-23** 19 - 38
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance)

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| 8. | Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan | 39 - 84 |
| | Report by Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) | |
| 9. | Moray Affordable Housing Investment Programme | 85 - 90 |
| | Report by Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) | |
| 10. | Housing Management Review and Service Developments | 91 - 98 |
| | Report by Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) | |
| 11. | Question Time *** | |
| | Consider any oral question on matters delegated to the Committee in terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration. | |

Item(s) which the Committee may wish to consider with the Press and Public excluded

12. **Building Services Trading Operation Budget 2022-23 Annual Budget and Budget Monitoring**
- Information on proposed terms and/or expenditure to be incurred by the Authority;
13. **Provision of Temporary Homeless Accommodation**
- Information relating to staffing matters;
 - Information relating to any particular occupier or former occupier of, or applicant for, accommodation provided by or at the expense of the Authority;
- Summary of the Housing and Community Safety Committee functions:**
- To deal with matters relating to Housing/HMOs, Housing Regeneration, Homelessness, Social Inclusion, Equalities, Community Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour (including road accidents) and Community Liaison.

Any person wishing to attend the meeting should contact customer services on 01343 563217 prior to the meeting as the number of attendees is restricted due to the recent Covid pandemic

You can however watch the webcast of the meeting by going to :
http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_43661.html

GUIDANCE NOTES

* **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests** - The Chair of the meeting shall seek declarations from any individual or political group at the beginning of a meeting whether any prior decision has been reached on how the individual or members of the group will vote on any item(s) of business on the Agenda, and if so on which item(s). A prior decision shall be one that the individual or the group deems to be mandatory on the individual or the group members such that the individual or the group members will be subject to sanctions should they not vote in accordance with the prior decision. Any such prior decisions will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

** **Written Questions** - Any Member can put one written question about any relevant and competent business within the specified remits not already on the agenda, to the Chair provided it is received by the Proper Officer or Committee Services by 12 noon two working days prior to the day of the meeting. A copy of any written answer provided by the Chair will be tabled at the start of the relevant section of the meeting. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than 10 minutes after the Council has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he or she can submit it in writing to the Proper Officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within 7 working days.

*** **Question Time** - At each ordinary meeting of the Committee ten minutes will be allowed for Members questions when any Member of the Committee can put a question to the Chair on any business within the remit of that Section of the Committee. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than ten minutes after the Committee has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he/she can submit it in writing to the proper officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within seven working days.

THE MORAY COUNCIL

Housing and Community Safety Committee

SEDERUNT

Councillor Amber Dunbar (Chair)
Councillor Donald Gatt (Depute Chair)

Councillor Theresa Coull (Member)
Councillor John Divers (Member)
Councillor Jérémie Fernandes (Member)
Councillor Sandy Keith (Member)
Councillor Scott Lawrence (Member)
Councillor Marc Macrae (Member)
Councillor Shona Morrison (Member)
Councillor Bridget Mustard (Member)
Councillor Kathleen Robertson (Member)
Councillor Derek Ross (Member)
Councillor Draeyk Van Der Horn (Member)

Ms Anna Bamforth (Non-Voting Member)
Ms Jane Bartecki (Non-Voting Member)
Mr Ronald Tolmie (Non-Voting Member)

Clerk Name:	Lindsey Robinson
Clerk Telephone:	07966 120593
Clerk Email:	committee.services@moray.gov.uk

Minute of Meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Committee**Tuesday, 21 June 2022****Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX****PRESENT**

Councillor James Allan, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Amber Dunbar, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor David Gordon, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Derek Ross

APOLOGIES

Councillor Theresa Coull, Ms Anna Bamforth, Ms Jane Bartecki, Mr Ronald Tolmie

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Housing and Property Service, Acting Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Property Asset Manager, Georgina Anderson, Senior Solicitor and Lindsey Robinson, Committee Services Officer, as Clerk to the Committee.

1. Chair

Councillor Amber Dunbar, being Chair of the Housing and Community Safety Committee, chaired the meeting.

2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders or Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

3. Resolution

The Meeting resolved that under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for items 12 and 13 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Paragraph Number of Minute	Paragraph Number of Schedule 7a and Reason
12	1 and 2 - Information relating to staffing matters and information relating to any occupier or former occupier of, or applicant for, accommodation provided by or at the expense of the Authority

13	9 - Information on terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority.
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4. Minute of the Meeting of 22 March 2022

The minute of the meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Committee dated 22 March 2022 was submitted and approved.

5. Written Questions **

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

6. Housing and Property Services - Unaudited Outturn as at 31 March 2022

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of the Council dated 22 February 2022, a report by the deputy Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) presented the unaudited outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period to 31 March 2022.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the unaudited outturn for 2021/22 for the period to 31 March 2022.

7. Local Housing Strategy 2019 - 2024 Mid Term Review

A report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of progress made in achieving the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy 2019-2024 and of the progress made with the development of the next Housing Need and Demand Assessment.

During discussion Councillor Gordon sought clarification as to whether compulsory purchase orders could be extended into the town centre regeneration projects.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property Services advised that there were a range of different factors that fed into a compulsory purchase such as the planning scenarios as well as other ongoing related activities but that it was something he could give consideration to through opportunities that arise but would not be something that would solely be within the remit of the Housing Service to deliver.

Following further consideration, the Committee agreed:

- i. to note progress made on the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy 2019-2024;
- ii. to approve the Local Housing Strategy action Plan 2022/23 - 2023/24;
- iii. to note progress made on development of the next Housing Need and Demand Assessment; and
- iv. the service developments of £46k per annum detailed at paragraph 5.3 of the report.

8. Housing Investment 2021-22

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the actual unaudited outturn to 31 March 2022 for the Housing Investment Programme for 2021/22.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the Housing Investment Programme unaudited outturn to 31 March 2022, as detailed in section 3 and appendices I to VI of the report.

9. Allocations Policy Annual Performance Report 2021-22

Under reference to paragraph 16 of the minute of the meeting of the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee dated 8 June 2021, paragraph 8 of the minute of the meeting of the Communities Committee dated 2 April 2019 and paragraph 9 of the minute of the meeting of the Communities Committee dated 5 February 2019, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the performance of the Council's Allocations Policy during 2021/22.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the performance identified within the report;
- ii. the allocations quotas for 2022/23 detailed at paragraph 5.4 of the report; and
- iii. the service developments of £41k per annum detailed at paragraph 7.4 of the report.

10. Performance Report (Housing and Property Services) - Period to March 2022

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of the meeting of the Council dated 7 August 2019, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2022.

During consideration Councillor Gatt asked if the full figures could be included in future reports in relation to rent arrears rather than just the percentages. This was agreed.

Following further consideration, the Committee agreed :

- i. to note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021;
- ii. to note the actions being taken to improve performance where required;
- iii. to grant delegated authority to the Head of Housing and Property Services to submit the Annual Assurance Statement on behalf of the Committee, following a briefing for Members as detailed in paragraph 6.9 of the report; and
- iv. that the full figures as well as percentages, in relation to rent arrears, be included in future reports.

11. Question Time ***

Councillor Morrison sought clarification on the waiting times for property adaptations and asked if there was an update on whether the waiting times had improved.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property Services advised that he did not have the figures to hand but that we are performing well in a national context and that good progress had been made locally.

12. Decommissioning of Temporary Homeless Accommodation [Para 1 & 2]

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the intent to cease using a building in Keith for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation to people who are homeless, as defined in Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, Part II, (Homeless Persons), as amended.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i. the proposed closure of the Temporary Accommodation property detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report;
- ii. delete the Hostel Caretaker post (Grade 3) from the Housing and Property staffing structure;
- iii. note that the Hostel Caretaker staff member will be redeployed to a suitable, vacant role within the service; and
- iv. note that alternative accommodation will be offered to the residential Hostel Caretaker in order to prevent homelessness.

13. Building Services Trading Operation Budget 2021-22 - Budget Monitoring [Para 9]

Under reference to paragraph 21 of the meeting of the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee dated 8 June 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) presented the unaudited budget monitoring information for the period to 31 March 2022 for the Building Service Trading Operation.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note:

- i. the unaudited financial information for the period to 31 March 2022, as detailed in section 5 and appendix I of the report: and
- ii. Building Services operating performance for the period to 31 March 2022, as set out in section 6 of the report.



**REPORT TO: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE ON 9
SEPTEMBER 2022**

**SUBJECT: HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES BUDGET MONITORING –
30 JUNE 2022**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND
FINANCE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the budget position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period up to 30 June 2022.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III G (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the management of budgets.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- i) **scrutinises and notes the budget monitoring report for the period to 30 June 2022.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council agreed the HRA Budget for 2022/23 at the meeting on 22 February 2022 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers). Housing and Property budget monitoring reports are presented quarterly.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TO 30 JUNE 2022

- 4.1 **APPENDIX I** details the HRA budget position to 30 June 2022.

- 4.2 The main expenditure variances relate to:–

- 4.2.1 **Supervision and management** – there are a range of variations within this budget resulting in a net underspend of £48k. This includes underspends in staffing (£37k), arising from vacancies and the budget provision for pay award, £19k for software due to invoice timing and £8k for other minor cumulative underspends including training. This was partially offset by an overspend in relation to voids (£16k).

- 4.2.2 **Sheltered Housing** – there was an overspend of £5k in the sheltered housing budget, which is comprised of repairs and maintenance related to fire protection works (£3k), increased energy costs (£1k) and other minor cumulative spend of £1k.
- 4.2.3 **Repairs and maintenance** – there was an underspend of £215k in the repairs and maintenance budget, which arises from reduced activity in planned/cyclical maintenance (£138k) and an underspend in voids (£77k). It should be noted that this underspend in voids reflects the ledger position at the end of quarter and does not include accruals. Actual activity levels in this area are in line with budgeted provision. The planned/cyclical position included main variance underspends in asbestos (£42k), external decoration and fabric repairs (£34k), rainwater goods (£42k), roof moss clearance (£33k) and disabled adaptations (£14k). These were partially offset by an overspend of £64k in electrical upgrades.
- 4.2.4 **Bad and doubtful debts** – there was an underspend of £6k against provision for bad & doubtful debts.
- 4.2.5 **Downsizing Incentive Scheme** – there was an underspend of £5k, with fewer transfers taking place. Work has commenced on increasing the uptake following restrictions easing, which is expected to increase spend as the year progresses.
- 4.2.6 **Service Developments** – there is an underspend of £114k, with recent committee approval for 1.4 FTE posts being progressing to recruitment and further approval sought in relation to Housing Management and Allocations and Housing Investment priorities.
- 4.2.7 The income at 30 June 2022 was £43k lower than expected. This is due mainly to the revised completion of the new development at Keith and fewer rechargeable repairs than budgeted.

5. **OTHER HOUSING BUDGET**

- 5.1 **APPENDIX II** provides details of the budget position to 30 June 2022.
- 5.2 **Planning and Development** - consists of Improvement Grants and Affordable Housing budgets, including disabled adaptations. The position at 30 June 2022 shows an underspend of £9k, arising from an underspend in discretionary grants (£18k), partially offset by an overspend of £9k, arising from a shortfall in income. This budget is administered by Moray Integration Joint Board.
- 5.3 **Housing Management** - relates to the Gypsy/Traveller budget. The position at 30 June 2022 shows an underspend of £1k, arising from lower site clearance costs.
- 5.4 **Homelessness/Allocations** - comprises of Homelessness and Housing Support services. There was an underspend of £1k in this budget, comprised

of underspends in Temporary Accommodation (£6k), partially offset by overspends in Housing Support (£2k) and general Homelessness (£3k).

- 5.5 **The Building Services Budget** - is reported in detail separately on this Committee's agenda and any surplus achieved or deficit will return to the HRA.
- 5.6 **The Property Services Budget** - includes the budgets for the Design Team and Property Resources. There is an overall overspend of £33k to date. Within the Design Team there were overspends in software (£11k) and staffing (£1k), partially offset by an underspend in consultancy (£7k). Within Property Asset Management there were overspends in maintenance (£16k) and Industrial Estates (£22k), partially offset by underspends in shared buildings (£5k), admin (£2k) and other (£3k).
- 5.7 The service has also holds a £6k underspend in relation to the Tenant Hardship Fund, which will be utilised in the course of the year.
- 5.8 As at 30 June 2022, the Other Housing budget shows a net overspend of £10k.

6. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The provision of new affordable housing, the maintenance of the Council's housing stock and dealing with homelessness are priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, the Council's Local Housing Strategy, the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and the Housing and Property Service Plan.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

There are no policy or legal implications arising from this report.

(c) **Financial Implications**

The financial implications of this report are considered in Sections 4 to 5 of this report and detailed in **APPENDICES I and II**.

(d) **Risk Implications**

Budget Managers are aware of their responsibilities for managing budget allocations and approval for variance will be sought from the Committee in line with Financial Regulations.

(e) **Staffing implications**

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) **Property**

None.

(g) **Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

There are no equalities/socio economic impacts arising from this report.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no climate change/biodiversity impacts arising from this report.

(i) Consultations

This report has been prepared in close consultation with Finance staff. Consultation on this report has been carried out with Lorraine Paisey (Head of Financial Services), Georgina Anderson (Legal Services Senior Solicitor), Senior Managers within Housing and Property Services and Lindsey Robinson (Committee Services Officer) who all agree the content of the report where it relates to their area of responsibility.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This report sets out the budget position for the HRA and General Services Housing budgets to 30 June 2022 and also comments on the variances on these budgets.

Author of Report: Edward Thomas, Head of Housing and Property
Background Papers: Held by author
Ref: SPMAN-1285234812-1153

Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2022

Service Description	Annual Budget 2022-23	Budget to 30 June 2022	Actual to 30 June 2022	Variance to 30 June 2022
Expenditure	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Supervision & Management	4,533	954	906	48
Sheltered Housing	25	7	12	(5)
Repairs and Maintenance	7,956	1,343	1,128	215
Financing Costs	4,096	0	0	0
Bad & Doubtful Debts	225	19	13	6
CFCR	4,303	0	0	0
Downsizing Incentive Scheme	72	18	13	5
Service Development	456	114	0	114
Total Gross Expenditure	21,666	2,455	2,072	383
Income	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Non-dwelling rents	242	82	79	(3)
House rents	21,335	5,779	5,752	(27)
IORB	2	0	0	0
Other income	87	23	10	(13)
Total Income	21,666	5,884	5,841	(43)
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	0	3,429	3,769	340
Accumulated Surplus Balance brought forward			2,458	
Estimated Surplus Balance at 31 March			2,458	

Monitoring to 30 June 2022

Service Description	Annual Budget 2022-23 £'000	Budget to 30 June 2022 £'000	Actual to 30 June 2022 £'000	Variance at 30 June 2022 £'000
Planning & Development	286	63	54	9
Housing Management	18	9	8	1
Homelessness / Allocations	2534	603	602	1
Miscellaneous General Services Housing	(20)	(5)	(11)	6
Building Services	0	(40)	(40)	0
Property Services	1296	206	239	(33)
General Services Housing & Property Savings	(402)	0	0	0
General Services Housing & Property Allocations	(161)	0	0	0
Covid 19 - GS Housing & Property	39	39	33	6
General Services Housing & Property Total	3590	875	885	(10)



**REPORT TO: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE ON 6
SEPTEMBER 2022**

SUBJECT: HOUSING INVESTMENT 2022/23

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND
FINANCE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 This report informs the Committee of the progress of the Housing Investment Programme 2022/23 to 30 June 2022.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III G (3) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the maintenance of the Council's housing stock.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

(i) **consider and note the progress of the Housing Investment Programme to 30 June 2022, as detailed in Section 3 and Appendices I to VI; and**

(ii) **Approves the service developments outlined in paragraph 3.10.**

3. BACKGROUND

Investment Programme

3.1 **APPENDIX I** shows income and expenditure up to 30 June 2022.

The figures show an overall spend to 30 June 2022 of £1,763,000 was achieved, which represents a spend of 10% against the £18,538,000 annual budget. There has been a considerable impact in the intended programme due to current market conditions and officers are endeavouring to re-profile as far as possible.

3.2 The Housing Investment Programme is a series of individual programmes of works which are designed to maintain and improve the quality of the Council's housing stock. The Council has a requirement to meet standards set by the Scottish Government in relation to the basic standard of the properties we let along with their energy performance. This information is reported annually to the Housing Regulator indicating our performance against various standards.

- 3.3 A stock condition survey was undertaken in 2021 to establish the overall condition of our residential properties and from this survey the programme for 2022/23 and beyond was developed. As reported to Council Committee on 22 February 2022 there is significant spend required to improve and then maintain the housing stock. With the report in February indicating that investment of over £20million per annum will be required from the next financial year and thereafter. There are many challenges in delivering this multi project and year programme not least ensuring there is capacity within the Council to deliver, monitor and review the projects but also the capacity in the in-house and external contractors required to deliver the works efficiently and to appropriate standards.
- 3.4 The level of expenditure within the individual budget headings that make up the programme are shown in paragraphs 3.5 to 3.8 below. The expenditure figure represents all payments which have progressed through the finance system to 30 June 2022. It should be noted that the first quarter of a financial year can produce lower spending as programmes are procured and contracts are set up and mobilised. There have also been significant resource limitations within the DLO, which have impacted on some programmes.
- 3.5 **APPENDIX II** shows expenditure on Response and Void Repairs. Spend was £661,000 to 30 June 2022. This area of work is the regular repairs undertaken by the Council's DLO which are generally triggered by a tenant contacting the Council's contact centre and requesting a repair to their property including gas heating repairs.
- 3.6 **APPENDIX III** shows expenditure on Estate Works. Spend of £91,000 was achieved to 30 June 2022. This area of work is general works to the landscaping and external areas within Council owned housing areas. Included within the area is asbestos works and surveys with significant spend required over the next few years to ensure we have accurate asbestos surveys of our properties.
- 3.7 **APPENDIX IV** shows expenditure on Cyclic Maintenance. Spend of £86,000 was achieved to 30 June 2022. This area of work is regular annual servicing of items installed within our properties like gas heating systems and the like. Within this heading there is an item for external paintwork. This is an area which has been lacking investment in the past. A 7 year programme for external decoration by location has been developed with all external decoration within the Housing portfolio to be completed over that timeframe. The programme will then be rolling in the future to ensure that no property goes longer than 7 years without redecoration in the future.
- 3.8 **APPENDIX V** shows expenditure on Planned Maintenance and Other Investments. Spend of £925,000 was achieved to 30 June 2022. This is the main section of the overall programme that looks to undertake significant improvements to the housing stock in order to meet the regulator requirements. Significant programmes at the moment include installation of new heating systems to 396 properties. These are identified in the appendix as ESSH Warm Homes R4 and LCITP which have both been carried forward from last year due to issues with delivery of materials and components. There are ongoing supply chain challenges, which officers are managing. These works along with ESSH Insulation, central heating

upgrades, window and door replacements are all designed to improve the energy performance of our housing stock. In particular there is a desire to upgrade our remaining properties which have an EPC rating of F or below within the next 12 months. In addition to these works, this section includes significant spend in relation to electrical installations. There is a regulator requirement that every dwelling within the housing portfolio is regularly electrically tested at least every 5 years. A programme of testing has not been managed previously and there is a significant catch up programme required with the intention to ensure all properties that have not been tested within 5 years are tested in the next 24 months. This will require some bringing forward to the investment in the programme. We are currently going through a procurement process to utilise the Scotland Excel framework to assist with delivery of the above mentioned work programmes as it is not possible to deliver the volume of works necessary using the DLO alone in the timescales required.

General Programme Updates

- 3.9 As stated above a major stock condition survey was carried out in early 2021. This has provided essential information on prioritised investment programmes for the next 30 years and gives advice on requirements to meet standards for Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) and Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) compliance. In order to meet ever more challenging energy performance targets from the regulator significant improvements will be required to our portfolio for years to come. It should be noted that the investment delivered previously has been around £11million per year. With this increase in requirement to meet the regulator standards and to make the properties the best they can be for the citizens of Moray the Council must ensure that budget spend is met. To that end the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2022/23 approved at Council on 22 February 2022 (paragraph 5 of the minute) identified service developments would be required with a budget of £456,000 set a side.
- 3.10 A review of the Housing Asset Management Team structure has been undertaken to identify areas of development to ensure delivery of the proposed forthcoming years of investment in the Housing stock. It is clear that an increased number of projects are required to ensure compliance with the regulator. Further, it is clear that good tenant communication is required to ensure tenants are informed of the various projects and supported during works being undertaken on their homes. To that end, it is intended to extend the team to include additional officers to manage the projects and develop targeted future works to ensure compliance with legislation. In addition to this, a specific role will be created to liaise with tenants to provide support before, during and on completion of works within a tenants property. This is seen as a critical role to support and ensure delivery as previous programmes have at times failed to deliver due to lack of tenant participation. A structure diagram is attached in **APPENDIX VII** with the additional posts highlighted. The total cost for these additional posts assuming they were all graded as anticipated and filled by November 2022 would be estimated at £72,555 this financial year. The full annual cost is estimated at £174,130.
- 3.11 A programme to upgrade smoke alarms in all Council properties in accordance with new legislation in the aftermath of the Grenfell tragedy is drawing to conclusion. The appointed contractor completed 4894 house

upgrades to 30 June 2022. Building Services DLO is also carrying out upgrades to properties as part of void and planned maintenance works, with a further 872 properties upgraded to 30 June 2022. This means that 5766 (92.63%) of properties were completed to the new standard at 30 June 2022. The target for compliance was February 2022 and has subsequently been relaxed by Scottish Government (currently no new deadline yet confirmed) and at 30 June 2022, 457 properties still require to be completed (253 properties require building warrants to be in place before works can commence, with no access the main reason for delays in the remainder).

- 3.12 As a result of the no access issues experienced, we are now considering moving to forced entry to gain access to undertake this work, which will only take place after all reasonable access attempts are exhausted, and will be carried out in accordance with our agreed forced entry procedure.

Income and Expenditure for Private Sector Housing

- 3.13 **APPENDIX VI** shows the position with regard to grant expenditure for Private Sector Housing Grant to 30 June 2022.
- 3.14 The legally committed figure in Category C of £51,000 represents 45.1% of the allocated budget. Spend to 30 June 2022 was £9,000 which represents 0.08% of the allocated budget. It is anticipated that this budget will fully commit.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The provision of new affordable housing, the maintenance of the Council's housing stock and dealing with homelessness are priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, the Council's Local Housing Strategy, the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and the Housing and Property Service Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

Maintenance and improvement works are carried out in order to meet statutory legal requirements and in accordance with current relevant policies.

(c) Financial implications

The financial implications associated within this report are dealt with in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.14 above, with details of the Council house new build programme now being the subject of a separate monitoring report.

(d) Risk implications

Failure to expend agreed budgets may affect the Council's ability to improve stock to the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS), replace life expired elements and attain the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). Budget Managers are aware of responsibilities for managing budget allocations and approval for variance will be sought from Committee in line with the Financial Regulations.

(e) Staffing implications

As detailed in paragraph 3.10 there is the intention to extend the Housing Asset Management Team to meet the demands of the investment programme with the cost of these additional resources being met by the Housing Revenue Account from the Service Development budget approved at Council on 22 February 2022 (paragraph 5 of the minute refers). These new posts will require to be graded by Human Resources prior to advertisement.

(f) Property

The improvement and maintenance of the housing stock will ensure that it remains sustainable in the longer term both physically and environmentally.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities issues associated with this report, as it is to inform the Committee on budget monitoring.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

The continued investment in the Council Owned Housing Stock identified in this report will assist the Council to achieve its climate change targets by utilising a range of energy saving measures that incorporate zero or low carbon into design, construction materials and systems that support the Council in achieving The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH).

(i) Consultations

Consultations have taken place with the Head of Housing and Property Services, Building Services Manager, Georgina Anderson (Legal Services Senior Solicitor), Chief Financial Officer, Lindsey Robinson (Committee Services Officer), Grant Cruickshank, HR Manager and Home Improvement Services Manager, who all agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The report shows the Council's progress in respect of Housing investment for both the Council's housing stock and the private sector. There are significant challenges ahead to ensure the Council's housing stock meet and retain standards to ensure compliance with Scottish Government and regulator requirements. Significant work is ongoing to develop long-term programmes and strategies to ensure compliance and maintain compliance. In order to achieve this additional staffing resource is required as set out in the report.

Author of Report: Paul Kendrick, Asset Manager
Background Papers: Held on file/sharepoint
Ref: SPMAN-1285234812-1131

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2022/23

30 June 2022
(all amounts in £'000)

HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

	Annual Budget 2022/23	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus committed to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
<u>Expenditure</u>						
Response, Gas & Void Repairs	4,486	661	15%	661	15%	3,825
Estate Works	665	91	14%	91	14%	574
Cyclic Maintenance	857	86	10%	86	10%	771
Planned Maintenance (Revenue)	1,550	212	14%	212	14%	1,338
Planned Maintenance (Capital)	10,610	661	6%	661	6%	9,949
Other Investment	370	52	14%	52	14%	318
Sub Total	18,538	1,763	10%	1,763	10%	16,775
<u>Other Capital Expenditure</u>						
New Build - Capital Costs	14,099			739		
Total	32,637			2,502		
<u>Funded by</u>						
HRA Revenue	7,928			1,102	14%	
Government Grant	11,200			636	6%	
Use of Council Tax Discount	600			0	0%	
Prudential Borrowing	6,866			764	11%	
Other Grants	1,740			0	0%	
Capital Receipts	0			0	0%	
C.F.C.R	4,303			0	0%	
Total	32,637			2,502	8%	

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2022/23

30 June 2022
(all amounts in £'000)

RESPONSE AND VOIDS REPAIRS

	Annual Budget 2022/23	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus committed to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
West Area Office	1,386	265	19%	265	19%	1,121
East Area Office	1,074	166	15%	166	15%	908
Void House Repairs & Dec Vouchers	1,426	161	11%	161	11%	1,265
Gas Heating Repairs	600	69	12%	69	12%	531
	4,486	661	15%	661	15%	3,825

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2022/23

30 June 2022
(all amounts in £'000)

ESTATE WORKS

	Annual Budget 2022/23	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus commitments to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
Garage Upgrades	25	1	4%	1	4%	24
Asbestos	360	18	5%	18	5%	341
Landscape Maintenance	50	3	6%	3	6%	47
Estates/Forum Upgrades	230	61	27%	61	27%	169
Miscellaneous	0	8	0%	8	0%	-8
	665	91	14%	91	14%	573

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2022/23

30 June 2022
(all amounts in £'000)

CYCLIC MAINTENANCE

	Outturn					
	Annual Budget 2022/23	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus commitments to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
Gas Servicing	360	51	14%	51	14%	309
Solid Fuel Servicing	15	0	0%	0	0%	15
Air Source Heat Pump Servicing	59	5	8%	5	8%	54
Smoke Detector Servicing	15	1	7%	1	7%	14
PPR & External Painterwork	358	25	7%	25	7%	333
General Servicing	50	4	8%	4	8%	46
Inspections/House Surveys	0	0	0%	0	0%	0
	857	86	10%	86	10%	771

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2022/23

30 June 2022
(all amounts in £'000)

PLANNED MAINTENANCE & OTHER INVESTMENTS

	Outturn					
	Annual Budget 2022/23	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus committed to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
Kitchens Replacements	1,000	179	18%	179	18%	821
Bathroom Replacements	175	0	0%	0	0%	175
Central Heating	1,500	179	12%	179	12%	1,321
Doors and Windows	1,100	155	14%	155	14%	945
Smoke Alarms/Co Upgrades	375	130	35%	130	35%	245
EESH - Insulation	1,000	0	0%	0	0%	1,000
EESH - Warm Homes R4 c/f	1,860	0	0%	0	0%	1,860
EESH - Lcitr c/f	2,600	0	0%	0	0%	2,600
EESH/EESH 2	1,000	18	2%	18	2%	982
Sub Total (Capital)	10,610	661	6%	661	6%	9,949
Rainwatergoods	250	0	0%	0	0%	250
Rain water goods - Roof Moss Cleaning	200	0	0%	0	0%	200
Roof and Fabric Repairs	500	61	12%	61	12%	439
Plumbing Upgrades	51	1	2%	1	2%	50
Electrical Upgrades	396	130	33%	130	33%	266
Safety & Security	21	0	0%	0	0%	21
Common Stairs	0	0	0%	0	0%	0
Energy Performance Certs (EPC)	0	5	0%	5	0%	-5
Sheltered Housing	10	2	20%	2	20%	8
Decoration Vouchers	72	15	21%	15	21%	57
Shower Installations	50	-2	-3%	-2	-4%	52
Sub Total (Revenue)	1,550	212	14%	212	14%	1,338
Disabled Adaptations	360	51	14%	51	14%	309
Enabling Projects	10	1	10%	1	10%	9
Sub Total (Other Investment)	370	52	14%	52	14%	318
Total	12,530	925	7%	925	7%	11,605

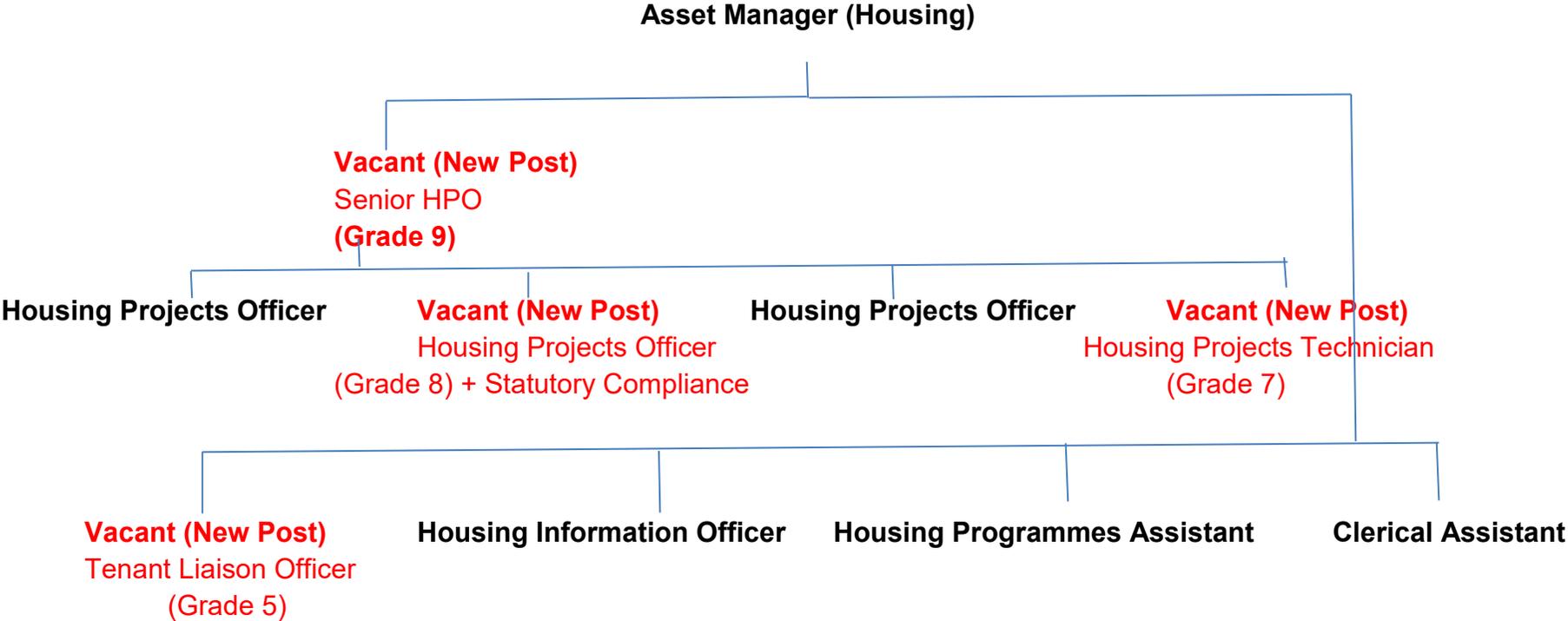
**PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING GRANT
SCHEME OF ASSISTANCE - 2022/23**

30 June 2022
(all amounts in £'000)

CATEGORY	Budget Allocation 2022/23	Spend to date	Balance	Item 7. Legally Committed	Completed Cases
Independent Living					
Category C	113,000	9	104,300	51,000	3
Overall Total	113,000	9	104,300	51,000	3

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS	
Category C	Grant Assistance to aid Independent Living - House Condition Works

Proposal



Note

Posts shown in black are the current team posts.
Highlighted in RED are new posts to the team



**REPORT TO: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE ON 6
SEPTEMBER 2022**

SUBJECT: RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND
FINANCE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to inform the Committee of progress on development on Moray's revised Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) and seeks approval for a service development in line with the priorities.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (G) (3 & 4) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the management and maintenance of the council's Housing Stock including housing for the homeless and sites for Gypsies/Travellers, and the allocation and letting of houses.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (i) **considers and notes the most recent iteration of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (Appendix 1) which was submitted to the Scottish Government on 3rd August 2022.**
- (ii) **agrees the service development of £46k per annum detailed in paragraph 4.1.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by the Scottish Government in October 2017 to produce short and long-term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping. This group produced recommendations which were wholly accepted by the Scottish Government. One of the HARSAG recommendations required that each local authority area develop and cost a 'Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan' by December 2018.
- 3.2 Moray Council wrote its original Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in 2019 without any indication of what funding may be made available by the Scottish

Government. Once funding levels were announced, (at around 20% of what was bid) it became clear that Moray Council could not adopt its original plan in its entirety. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, which saw a significant period where the letting of housing was paused and the demand for temporary accommodation increased, further added to the difficulties faced in progressing the RRTP as originally planned. In common with other local authorities, it has also proved challenging to recruit suitable staff for the roles. Although some progress has been made, the RRTP (**Appendix I**) has now been updated to better reflect current circumstances aspirations.

- 3.3 Of our original funding bid of £2.5 million, only £518k was received. Our revised 4-year plan has been budgeted for in accordance with our allocation. This is detailed in our budget plan (**Appendix II**).
- 3.4 The RRTP reiterates that Moray Council will continue to implement its Housing Options approach and prevent homelessness wherever possible. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, the Council would implement its Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan where appropriate. This means that homeless households would get:
- a settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;
 - time in any form of temporary accommodation kept to a minimum; and
 - where temporary accommodation is required, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.
- 3.5 At 31 March 2022, 99 units of temporary accommodation were in occupation, with zero B&B in use. We are also on course to achieve a further 10 unit reduction during 2022. This is a significant achievement as the majority of other local authorities have seen a rise in the use of temporary accommodation.
- 3.6 Another notable milestone has been the launch of our Housing First programme. After initially finding recruitment of appropriately skilled housing support workers challenging, we now have two established support workers managing our first 5 tenancies. It is anticipated that we will support a further 5 tenancies by the end of this calendar year.

4. Service Development

- 4.1 The HRA budget set by Moray Council on 22 February 2022 (Paragraph 5 of Minute refers) included provision for service developments totalling £456k for identified service priorities. Officers are now seeking approval to recruit one additional Housing Needs Officer in line with this provision.
- 4.2 The Housing Needs Officer post dually operates between undertaking statutory homeless assessments and allocating properties, not only for council tenancies, but also providing nominations to our partner Registered Social Landlords also. Additional capacity is required to efficiently undertake the additional allocations workload arising from the significant increase in the housing stock over the past decade, with a particular focus on minimising rent loss arising from void properties. In line with the precepts of rapid rehousing, it is also acknowledged that homeless assessments have become

proportionately more challenging due to the complex nature and often multiple needs of the clients who access the service and accordingly additional case management time is required to identify long-term accommodation requirements, thereby reducing offer refusals, tenancy failure and repeat homelessness, all of which come at a cost to the HRA.

4.3 It is expected that this additional resource would have a positive impact on the areas listed below:

- Allocate properties in a more timely manner, thus speeding up the voids process and limiting void rent loss. This will also lead to a further reduction in the time that clients may be required to reside in temporary accommodation.
- As we are now adopting a more focussed casework model for homeless applications, in line with our RRTP principles, Housing Needs Officers are required to be involved with our clients throughout their homeless journey.
- Housing Needs Officers will also be able to become more responsive to enquiries from elected members, the local MP and MSP, our clients and other statutory bodies who often contact our department.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The provision of new affordable housing, the maintenance of the Council's housing stock and dealing with homelessness are priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, the Council's Local Housing Strategy, the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and the Housing and Property Service Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

There are no policy or legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Financial implications

The financial implications are detailed in para 4.1 above and will be a cost to the Housing Revenue Account in 2022/23 of £46,264 per annum.

(d) Risk Implications

The risk of not implementing the proposals within this report and agreeing to the staffing proposal are that the council will not be able to fully realise the ambitions within the RRTP and our void loss due to properties not being allocated timely, will continue.

(e) Staffing Implications

Approval of the service development detailed in paragraph 4.1 will result in a 1.0 FTE increase in the Housing Needs service. The required post will go to HR for recruitment if approval is granted by the Committee.

(f) Property

There are no property requirements/implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

It is a statutory requirement that equality issues should be addressed in the RRTP. An EqlA has been undertaken and submitted to the Scottish Government along with the RRTP.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no climate change/biodiversity impacts arising from this report.

(i) Consultations

Consultation on this report has taken place with Housing Needs Manager, Georgina Anderson (Legal Services Senior Solicitor), Lorraine Paisey (Chief Finance Officer), Grant Cruikshank (HR Manager) and Lindsey Robinson (Committee Services Officer).

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This report provides the Committee with a revised copy of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (2022-26), with costings. The report also seeks approval to recruit a Housing Needs Officer.

Author of Report: Edward Thomas, Head of Housing and Property
Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-1285234812-1150



Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

Version 2

2022/3 to 2026/7

5/8/2022

Contents

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1. Introduction

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was set up by Scottish Government in October 2017 to produce short and long-term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping. Led by best evidence, the cornerstone of recommendations was a transition to a Rapid Rehousing approach of which Housing First forms a smaller component.

Rapid rehousing requires all local authorities in Scotland to take a housing led approach for rehousing people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying for a period in temporary accommodation. The ultimate aim is to eliminate homelessness where possible and to ensure that, for anyone experiencing homelessness, it is speedily resolved.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:

- A settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible in an area where the applicant chooses to live;
- Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation is reduced to an absolute minimum, with the fewer transitions the better;
- When temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.

For people with multiple needs beyond housing:

- Housing First is the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages;

When HARSAG was created, each local authority was given access to a sub group, or Hub, and tasked with developing its own Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP). The Hubs were provided with support from Scottish Government and continue to meet regularly to share experiences and good working practices.

When the pandemic occurred, the Scottish Government asked HARSAG to reconvene in June 2020 to ensure arrangements were in place so everyone had somewhere suitable to sleep where they could socially distance and to remove rough sleepers from the streets. The Local Housing Allowance was increased (and remains at its increased level) to enable easier access to private rented properties (which normally have higher rents than social housing), and evictions which would have led to homelessness, were prohibited. In addition, the ban on using unsuitable accommodation was moved forward from April 2021 to October 2020. This sent out a strong signal that Bed and Breakfast accommodation and hotels were not to be seen as a replacement for a safe and stable home.

Moray Council wrote its original Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in 2019 without any indication of what funding may be made available by the Scottish Government. Once funding levels were announced, (at around 20% of what was bid) it became clear that Moray Council could not adopt its original plan in its entirety. The onset of the Covid 19 pandemic in March 2020, which saw a significant period where the letting of housing was paused and the demand for temporary accommodation increased, further added to the difficulties faced in progressing the RRTP as originally planned. In common with other local authorities, it has also proved challenging to recruit suitable staff for the roles. Although some progress has been made, the original RRTP has now been updated to better reflect current circumstances and provides an update for year 1 of the plan. Statistics on homeless applications, outcomes, use of temporary accommodation, etc have been taken from 2021/22 data.

The Council has considered how it can transform current service provision over the next 4 years to reduce homelessness in Moray. It has also updated the resources that will be required to make the transformational change whilst taking into account the financial limitations. The Council has looked at how it can minimise costs by making homelessness a “corporate” responsibility rather than simply a “housing” problem. Further discussions with other council services, agencies, housing associations, third sector partners and service users will help shape future services with the aim of preventing homelessness where possible.

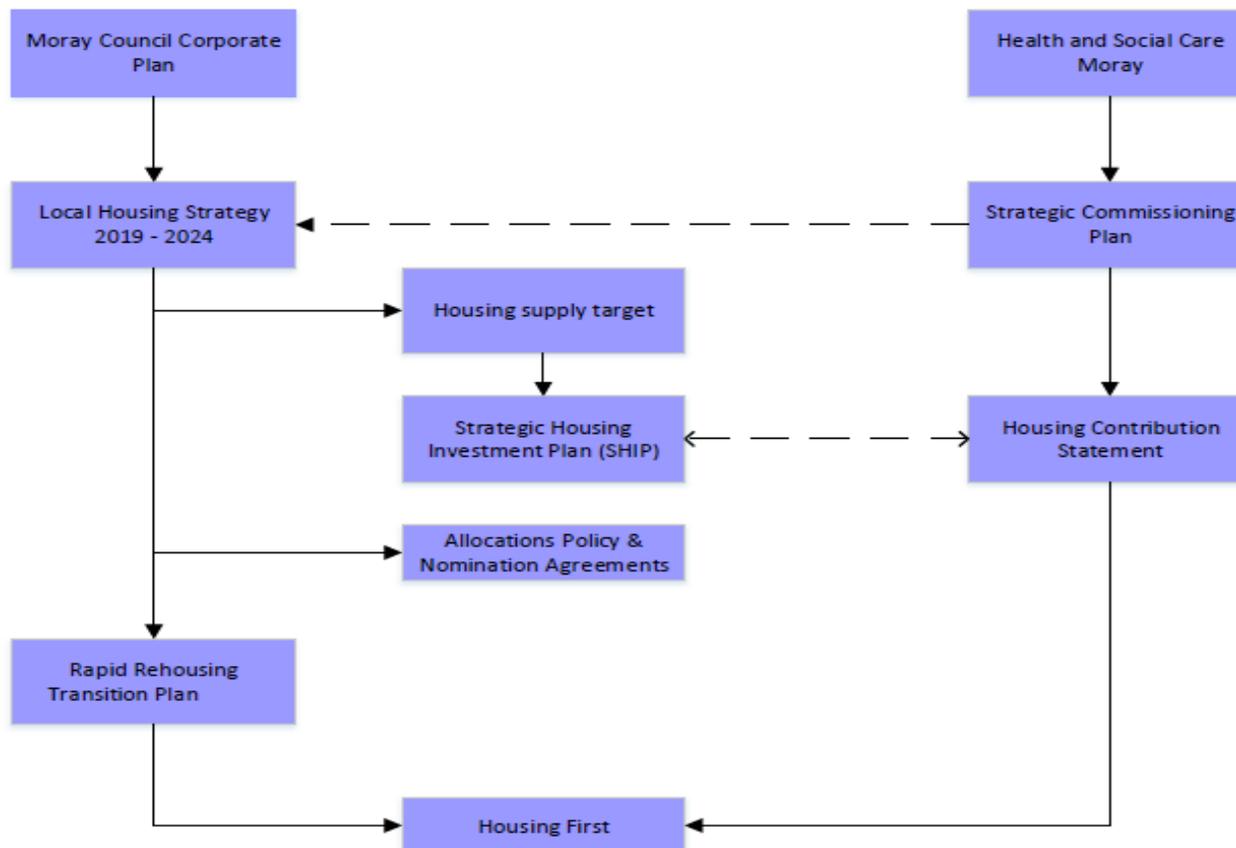
The RRTP will be subject to changes of legislation over the four year period and these will be incorporated into the RRTP where required. Following a consultation by Scottish Government earlier this year, one of the initial changes is expected to be a greater involvement from other statutory agencies to ‘ask and act’ to ensure they have a responsibility to play a role in the prevention of homelessness. This would include police, GP’s, medical staff, etc being required to ask anyone presenting to them of their housing status and reporting these outcomes to the local authority housing department. This will allow advice and action to be taken sooner than is currently the case and ultimately be less traumatic for those concerned. If this is implemented, it will mean increased contact with other agencies and an increase in the number of referrals to housing staff. This will have financial and staffing implications. Meantime, the Scottish Government is expected to confirm the outcome of the consultation within weeks.

The transformational change set out in this RRTP will cover the period 2022/23 to 2026/27.

2. Links to other Strategies and Plans

The graphic below illustrates the linkages between strategic approaches relating to rapid rehousing and Housing First, covering allocation policy priorities, approaches to increasing supply including new build, and care and support services.

This Plan is one of a suite of strategic documents which make up the Local Housing Strategy which is reviewed annually as part of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) process. The RRTP will also influence Health and Social Care Moray's Strategic Commissioning Plan and associated Housing Contribution Statement.



A number of legislative changes have already taken place, or are expected to take place, since the RRTP was first written. These include:

➤ **Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 (Commencement No.4) Order 2019**

Intentionality – Whilst this was a duty to be carried out as part of the assessment process, since 7 November 2019 it has been amended to a ‘discretionary power’. This means that there is no longer a requirement for the local authority to consider intentionality when reaching a conclusion on homelessness priority. However, the local authority is still required to find solutions to the homeless situation regardless of intentionality.

Removal of Local Connection – The duty to carry out an assessment for a Local Connection was also due to be removed in May 2021 but was postponed due to the pandemic. Currently, where an applicant has a connection with another local authority rather than Moray, they would generally be referred back to that local authority for permanent housing, unless they were a subject of domestic abuse. This also applies to applicants in other areas who can be referred back to Moray. When the change is enacted, this will no longer be the case. This means that anyone can present themselves as homeless in Moray and seek permanent rehousing. This applies to all Scottish local authorities and could impact the number of applications received in high demand areas throughout Scotland. Currently, Scottish Government has said it is committed to the introduction of the change which requires a Scottish Statutory Instrument to be laid before Parliament. Due to the potential impact of the Ukrainian refugee settlement programme and availability of temporary accommodation, no date for this has been set for when this change will now take place.

- **Extension of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2004** -Following consultation, the Scottish Government agreed to make amendments to the Unsuitable Accommodation Order by extending it to include all categories of homeless applicants. This means that anyone staying in temporary homeless accommodation for more than 7 days which is deemed unsuitable for the applicants’ needs, will result in a breach of the Order. Due to the pandemic, the Order was brought forward and become effective in May 2020, which was a full 12 months before originally planned. In recent years, Moray Council have been pro-actively aiming to provide more suitable temporary accommodation and reduce the dependency on Bed and Breakfast and hostel type accommodation. Although this is better for the applicant, it has put additional pressure on Moray Council to find alternative accommodation types.

➤ **Duty to Prevent Homelessness**

In October 2019, the Scottish Government announced a Prevention Review Group consisting of experts and key partners, supported by Crisis, that were to consider options for introducing legislation ensuring all public bodies work together to prevent homelessness. This group came up with proposals which have been subject to wider consultation earlier this year. The result of that consultation is expected to be published during late summer/autumn 2022. If accepted, it will signify a change, in that homelessness will become a responsibility for all public bodies rather than just housing. It could also mean additional workloads for local authority housing departments. One of the proposed changes is that people will be considered at risk of homelessness if their accommodation is at risk within a 6 month period. Currently only 2 months is the catalyst. Scottish Government has recognised that this could mean additional costs for local authorities and it is understood that a funding package will be considered once the outcome is known.

3. Moray's Housing Market

There are approximately 43,000 households in Moray and this is expected to increase to 47,700 households by 2037. In common with many other parts of Scotland, Moray is projected to have an increasing proportion of smaller households over this period.

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is due for review during 2022/23. The current HNDA of 2017 was appraised as “robust and credible” by the Centre for Housing Market Analysis on 17 April 2018. The HNDA findings were broadly consistent with those of the previous HNDA 2011, in that there is an acute shortage of affordable housing in Moray. The 2017 HNDA found that 2,120 new housing units were required during 2018/19 to 2023/24 to meet need (424 per year), and of those **56%** should be provided as “affordable housing”. New build affordable housing completions for Moray Council and RSL's between 2018/19 and 2021/22 was 351. (2018/19 68 units, 2019/20 72 units, 2020/21 102 and 2021/22 109 units). Although below what is required, each year demonstrates an increase of new builds from the previous year.

The Council is the biggest social landlord in Moray, with 6297 properties. Local Housing Associations own around 2799 properties. Together this housing stock generates around 600 vacancies per year. Moray has proportionally fewer social rented properties (19%) and a smaller private rented sector (11%) than the Scottish average.

At 31 March 2022, there were 3472 households registered on the Council's housing list, and on average there were 6.9 applicants for every vacancy. This ratio varies widely across house sizes. The greatest pressure is on 4 bedroom properties (69:1) and on 1 bed general needs (27:1). There is considerably less pressure on 2 bed general needs properties (4:1). At any given time, Moray Council has approximately **100 – 130** statutorily homeless households waiting to be permanently rehoused.

4. Homelessness Context

Homelessness in Moray

Table 1 shows that, apart from 2020/21, homelessness has continued at comparable levels since 2017/18. The pandemic may have played a part in 2020/21 as people had to remain in their current accommodation.

Table 1	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Homeless Assessments completed	537	572	528	455	507

Source: HL1 data

Table 2 provides the reasons for the differences in applications:

Table 2	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	Number	%								
Termination of tenancy/ mortgage due to arrears	33	6.1	34	6	19	3.6	11	2.4	25	4.9
Other action by landlord resulting in termination	41	7.6	50	8.7	53	10	20	4.4	44	8.7
Applicant terminated secure accommodation	7	1.3	13	2.3	15	2.8	11	2.4	19	3.7
Loss of tied/service accommodation	6	1.1	8	1.4	4	0.8	2	0.4	4	0.8
Discharge from prison/hospital/care/other	29	5.4	27	4.7	23	4.4	17	3.7	12	2.4
Emergency (fire, flood, storm, closing order)	17	3.2	6	1	17	3.2	8	1.8	9	1.8
Forced division/sale of matrimonial home	5	1	14	2.4	3	0.6	6	1.3	8	1.6

Other reason for loss of accommodation	0	0	5	0.9	4	0.7	4	0.9	3	0.6
Dispute within household (violent or abusive)	64	12	62	10.9	66	12.5	88	19.3	71	14
Dispute within household (non-violent or abusive)	68	12.6	82	14.3	75	14.2	72	15.8	53	10.4
Fleeing non-domestic violence	7	1.3	9	1.6	8	1.5	10	2.2	7	1.4
Harassment	15	2.8	11	2	7	1.3	5	1.1	17	3.4
Overcrowding	14	2.6	21	3.7	30	5.7	8	1.8	5	1
Asked to leave	208	38.7	192	33.5	173	32.8	175	38.5	155	30.5
Other reason for leaving accommodation/household	23	4.3	38	6.6	31	5.9	18	4	75	14.8
Total	537	100	572	100	528	100	455	100	507	100

Source: HL1 data

Moray performs well in reaching decisions on homeless applications within 28 days, i.e. the benchmark set by the Code of Guidance on Homelessness 2005. During the most recent 5 years, 98.2% of all cases were assessed within 28 days. Table 1 provides details of performance.

Table 3	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
Statutory Decisions	No	%								
Under 28 days	518	96.46	557	98.24	530	99.62	449	98.68	500	98.43
Over 28 days	19	3.54	10	1.76	2	0.38	6	1.32	8	1.57
Total	537	100	567	100	532	100	455	100	508	100

Source: HL1 data

ABOVE INCLUDES THOSE WHO WITHDREW APPLICATION< LOST CONTACT< ETC

The number of Housing Options interviews during 2020/21 decreased to **802**, from the average **1051** over the preceding 3 years. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the number of interviews which progressed to a homeless application also fell during 2020/21 to **455** from an average of **545** over the same 3 year period. This coincided with the start of the pandemic when people were required to stay

indoors. Smaller reductions were also experienced during 2021/22 although the numbers have almost returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The Scottish statistics for 2020/21 confirm the following:

- The group most likely to become homeless are aged 18 to 49 (85%) although that age group in the general population accounts for only 50%;
- The majority of applicants are increasingly single person households (68%) of which males account for 58%;
- The main reason for homelessness is being “asked to leave” (30% for males, 22% female);
- This is followed by a “non-violent dispute within the household” (25% of males and 19% females) although there is an increasing trend towards violence in relationships being a cause (6% males and 26% female)
- Moray recorded a very low number of rough sleepers;
- The vast majority of homeless households (93%) have a local connection to the local authority to which they apply;
- Applicants with no connection to any local authority (5%) are required to be housed within the authority to which they have applied;
- Local connection is mainly associated with residency and family association;
- Approximately 60% of presentations were found to be statutorily “homeless/ potentially homeless unintentional”; and
- Repeat homelessness in Scotland was only 5% during 2020/21 which was down from 15% in previous years. Moray had 3.9% in both 2020/21 and 2021/22 which was generally lower than the Scottish average.

The characteristics of homeless households have remained consistent in recent years with a **high proportion of single person households** compared to families. The higher proportion of single person households is significant in relation to demand for temporary and permanent accommodation, particularly **1 bed properties**. The age range of applicants has also remained consistent with over half aged 26 to 59 and around one third aged 18 to 25.

Table 4 below, provides an analysis of homeless decisions from 2017/18 to 2021/22. It demonstrates that during this period, with the exception of 2020/21, that numbers of homeless applications are consistent, varying only by 10% across the period.

Table 4					
Homeless Decisions	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Homeless - priority unintentional	274	270	303	274	309
Homeless - priority intentional	42	49	36	20	6
Potentially homeless - priority unintentional	46	59	44	36	66
Potentially homeless - priority intentional	3	4	3	4	2
Neither homeless nor potentially homeless	65	62	42	38	40
Applicant resolved homelessness prior to assessment decision	63	72	60	54	40
Lost contact before assessment decision (from 1 April 2007)	6	7	4	7	6
Withdrew application before assessment decision (from 1 April 2007)	32	35	32	20	36
Ineligible for assistance (from 1 April 2007)	6	9	8	1	3
All	537	567	532	454	508

Source: HL1 data

The table above demonstrates that overall, an increasing number of priority applicants are being assessed as 'unintentionally homeless' while 'intentionally homeless' cases are reducing. The number succeeding in resolving their situation prior to officers reaching a decision has also reduced. This puts greater pressure on housing to provide settled accommodation whilst attempting to reduce the time any applicants stay in temporary accommodation. This demonstrates why the quota of allocations for cases assessed as homeless has been increased in recent years to 50%.

Rough Sleeping in Moray

Scottish Government data (**Table 5**) shows that overall, the prevalence of rough sleeping is slowly reducing which is also evident in Moray. In Moray, there was an upturn in numbers of applicants identified as having slept rough during the previous 3 months when assessed in 2021/22. This was significant for Moray as some local authorities showed no increase during the same period. Homeless applicants self-certify that they have slept rough and while it is important to gather this information, Officers do not observe rough sleepers on the streets of Moray in a manner similar to the streets of Scotland's larger cities (i.e. Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen).

Table 5	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
Slept rough night before	27	5.02%	35	6.10%	31	5.85%	22	4.84%	27	5.30%
Slept rough in last 3 months	71	13.20%	86	14.98%	61	11.51%	68	14.95%	54	10.61%

Source: HL1 data

Whilst the allocations quota for homeless applicants has been increased in recent years, the development of a Housing First service is expected to show a reduction in the number of future rough sleepers. RSL's will be nominated Housing First clients in due course as per the new nominations agreements.

Housing Options/ Homelessness Prevention

Housing options is defined by the Scottish Government as “a process which starts with housing advice when someone approaches a local authority with a housing problem.” Local authorities must take a holistic approach and offer advice and assistance specifically tailored to an individual's circumstances. The aim of housing options is to prevent homelessness (where possible) before it occurs.

In October 2010, the Council introduced its Housing Options Team. The Team has evolved over time and currently provides an advice service to households who are generally in accommodation but experiencing housing difficulties. The Housing Options team are also often the first contact for homeless applicants.

The Council has robust mechanisms in place to ensure that there is no “gatekeeping” of those who attend a housing options interview. All households are informed of their right to make a homeless application and sign off the advice they have received and the options they decide to pursue.

Housing Options continues to be an effective service that can prevent homelessness and alleviate other housing situations which, if not addressed, can lead to homelessness. A thorough and comprehensive review of the service is due during 2023/4 which will include additional training for the staff.

Whilst a short survey of local Lettings Agents in Moray has demonstrated that tenants who hold Private Residential Tenancies are tending to stay in their current accommodations, landlords are keen to increase rentals or ‘cash in’ on a buoyant housing market and sell their properties. Landlords who have sold their properties have done so due to the rising level of property values or the increasing legislation they must adhere to and the reducing profit element of the rent. This all points to a potential future increase of homeless applications.

Table 6 provides details of the number of households who have received a housing options interview and the outcomes that resulted from this:

Table 6: Outcomes	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No	%
Remained in current accommodation	246	23.30%	337	31.55%	342	33.20%	248	30.92%	339	36.53%
Made homeless application to LA	446	42.23%	375	35.11%	342	33.20%	323	40.27%	338	36.42%
Moved in with friends/relatives	99	9.38%	125	11.70%	127	12.33%	81	10.10%	90	9.70%
LA tenancy	27	2.56%	46	4.31%	56	5.44%	39	4.86%	46	4.96%
Private rent-short assured/PRT	82	7.77%	67	6.27%	53	5.15%	39	4.86%	41	4.42%
Other (known)	15	1.42%	20	1.87%	22	2.14%	18	2.24%	24	2.58%
Not known	17	1.61%	7	0.66%	6	0.58%	10	1.25%	18	1.94%
Housing Association tenancy	19	1.80%	17	1.59%	29	2.82%	16	2.00%	12	1.29%
Lost contact prior to final outcome	84	7.95%	44	4.12%	38	3.69%	17	2.12%	11	1.19%
Lodger	8	0.76%	13	1.22%	6	0.58%	2	0.25%	4	0.43%
Bought own home-other means	4	0.38%	8	0.75%	2	0.19%	2	0.25%	3	0.32%
Supported accommodation	1	0.09%	1	0.09%			1	0.12%	1	0.11%
Shared property-Private rented	2	0.19%			2	0.19%			1	0.11%
Women’s refuge			1	0.09%					0	
Residential care/nursing home			1	0.09%			1	0.12%	0	
Low cost home ownership			1	0.09%					0	

Table 6: Outcomes	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No	%
Sheltered accommodation	3	0.28%			1	0.10%	1	0.12%	0	
Shared property LA	2	0.19%							0	
Shared property RSL					1	0.10%			0	
Prison	1	0.09%	3	0.28%	2	0.19%	4	0.50%	0	
Hospital			1	0.09%					0	
Private rented assured tenancy			1	0.09%	1	0.10%			0	
Total	1056	100%	1068	100%	1030	100%	802	100%	928	100.00%

Source: PREVENT1 Data (Annual report for Moray).

Although the Council has been unable to implement its RRTP in full, there have been areas where improvements have already been made. One area is the average time taken from receiving a homeless application to full 'discharge of duty' which has fallen from **135** days in 2020/21 to **121** in 2021/22. One area of concern by HARSAG was the length of time it took applicants to navigate the 'homeless process'. This needed to be minimised in order to reduce the stresses associated with households being homeless. This has been successfully reduced, in part due to the reduced number of applications, but the aim is to further reduce this time period in 2022/23 to **100** days.

Housing Options work in partnership with other Council Services, Partner Agencies, the third sector and families to prevent and alleviate homelessness. Current services/partners include:

Council Services

- Housing Support Service (community) and Housing Support Service (temporary accommodation);
- Occupational Therapist (based in Housing Team and jointly funded by the Moray Integration Joint Board);
- Community Safety Team;
- Money Advice; Income Maximisation; and Welfare Benefits Teams;
- Children and Family Social Work Services;
- Criminal Justice/Youth Justice; and
- Revenues Team which incorporates Housing Benefit.

Partner Organisations

- Moray Integration Joint Board;
- Citizens Advice Bureau;
- Arrows (Drug and Alcohol Service);
- Advocacy Services; and
- Moray Women's Aid (includes residential support service for women experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse)
- SACRO (Residential Support Service for those with Addictions)
- SACRO (Residential Support Service for young people 16 -24)

Homeless households continue to present to the local authority with a range of vulnerabilities. These can often become a barrier into permanent accommodation and extend the period of time that households remain in a homeless situation. Housing Support is a key element of the service which can be adjusted to accommodate the level of support required by the applicant to enable households to move through the system sooner. Levels of support can be low, medium or high for someone with more complex needs or who experience severe multiple disadvantage.

Of the 354 households who received housing support in 2021/22, 133 were already involved with other services. Lack of life-skills (197) was the highest reason for requesting the service. This was followed by Alcohol/Substance misuse (75) Financial/Literacy (41), and Poor Mental Health (40). This service continues to operate under pressure.

Table 7 highlights the type of vulnerabilities that homeless people in Moray are presenting with. Many applicants have more than 1 identified vulnerability:

Table 7 - Types of Identified Vulnerabilities	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Financial difficulties /debt /unemployment	160	206	234	195
Physical health reasons	139	120	148	188
Mental Health reasons	268	244	239	316
Unmet need for support from housing/social work/health services	11	7	13	8
Unmet need for support from friends/family	82	63	77	102
Difficulties managing on own	57	43	40	49
Drug/Alcohol dependency	71	41	60	57
Criminal/anti-social behaviour – victim	31	20	43	61
Criminal /anti-social behaviour - perpetrator	20	17	15	41
Not to do with applicant household (e.g. landlord selling property, fire, circumstances of other persons sharing previous property, harassment by others, etc.)	19	8	8	8
ALL	858	769	877	1025

Source: Prevent 1 data – This became a mandatory reporting requirement to the Scottish Government in 2014/15.

Mental Health and Poverty

Poor mental health and poverty levels continue to be the main reasons for vulnerability. Together, these account for 50% of referrals, although applicants can present with both.

The Housing Service seeks to prevent households in rent arrears from being evicted from council housing. If court action is initiated, Housing Operations Managers will thoroughly review each case and agree actions to prevent eviction where possible. This includes attempting to engage with the tenant after Decree has been obtained and up to the point of the eviction. The approach is multi-disciplinary with Housing Managers, Housing Officers, Children and Families Social Work, Housing Options and the Housing Support Teams all playing key prevention roles. Emergency legislative changes due to the pandemic were put in place and were effective from April 2020 to March 2022. Regulations which temporarily prevented the enforcement of evictions ended nationally in August 2021. The changes resulted in a reduction from 1151 tenancy terminations (due to evictions and abandonments) in 2019/20 in

Scotland of which 1112 (or 97%) were due to rent arrears. This dropped to 32 terminations in 2020/21 with only 3 cases (or 9%) due to rent arrears. Eviction continues to be the option of last resort and the Council will only pursue this where the household refuses to engage with services. **Table 8** sets out the number of court actions and the number of evictions in Moray.

Table 8	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Court Actions initiated with the potential for eviction	61	58	78	0	2
Number of properties recovered because rent had not been paid	9	10	10	0	1
Number of properties recovered because of antisocial behaviour			1		
Total	9	10	11	0	1

Source: ARC data

Mental/Physical health

These can sometimes be complex and require a multi-disciplinary approach to find the most appropriate housing solution. Homeless households who self-identify that they have problems with their mental and/or physical health may not have a clinical diagnosis but continuing research into health and homelessness supports a conclusion that being at risk or becoming homeless does have a detrimental impact on people. The Housing Service has developed strong links with the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) and there are many examples of good practice both in terms of joint working and the delivery of new housing services for those with complex needs. The MIJB has jointly funded an Occupational Therapist located in the Housing Service. This post works closely with the Hospital Discharge Team and assesses health and housing needs which has proved very effective. It has stopped homeless cases arriving unexpectedly at Moray Council and enabled applications to be fast-tracked through the system. It has not only averted homelessness but has also resulted in a reduction in 'bed-blocking' and applicants having shorter periods in temporary accommodation.

There is need for all services to improve their understanding of mental/physical health and how this can impact on households who become homeless or at risk of homelessness. There is a need to develop a joint approach with other services rather than homelessness simply being regarded as a "housing problem".

Unmet need for support

More than half of homelessness presentations arise due to relationship difficulties with their household. Households who indicated a lack of support from housing/social work/health services will be targeted for Housing First. Local knowledge and the consistency of data over the last 5 years justify an annual requirement for 10 Housing First cases per year. The Council has had difficulty recruiting support worker staff to develop this service. This isn't unique to Moray Council as it is known that other providers have experienced similar difficulties. However, 2 staff have now been seconded to these posts for a 2 year period and the service became operational from June 2022. The number of households identified for Housing First will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Drug and Alcohol Dependency

The number of households who self-identified that they were vulnerable due to drug/alcohol misuse has reduced in recent years. While this is welcome, households with these problems can often be the most difficult to accommodate. SACRO works in partnership with the Council to provide a residential housing support service for households with these difficulties.

Antisocial behaviour/Homelessness

The Community Safety Team is a multi-disciplinary Team involving staff from Environmental Health, Housing, Police, Social Work and Education (when appropriate). They work together to tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour across all tenures in Moray. In terms of homelessness, a low number of households report that they are vulnerable due to anti-social behaviour either as a victim or perpetrator.

5. Health and Homelessness

On 19 June 2018, the Scottish Government published a study exploring the relationship between homelessness and health. This built upon analysis undertaken in the USA by Fife Council and NHS Fife in 2015. The study links homelessness and health datasets for the first time at a national level and explored the relationship between homelessness and health in Scotland.

This research combines Scottish Government homelessness data (HL1) with six health datasets from NHS National Service Scotland covering Accident and Emergency attendances (A&E2), Inpatient admissions (SMR01), Outpatient appointments (SMR00), Prescriptions (PIS), the Scottish Drugs Misuse Database (SDMD) and Mental Health admissions (SMR04), together with information about deaths from National Records of Scotland. The key findings from the study were:

- At least **8% of the Scottish population** (as at 30 June 2015) had experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.
- Of those who had experienced homelessness at some point:
 - Over half (51%) had no evidence of health conditions relating to drugs, alcohol or mental health. This was much lower than in the control groups (MDC 74%, LDC 86%).
 - Around 30% had evidence of a mental health problem at some point during the study period (with no evidence of drug or alcohol-related conditions at any point). This was higher than in the control groups (MDC 21%, LDC 13%).
 - There was evidence of drug and/or alcohol-related interactions for the remaining fifth of people (19%), higher than in the control groups (MDC 5.1%, LDC 1.2%). Of these, the vast majority (94%) also had evidence of mental health issues.
 - Around **6%** of people experiencing homelessness **had evidence of all three** of the following conditions – a mental health condition, a drug-related condition and an alcohol-related condition – although not necessarily at the same time. This was much higher than in the control groups (MDC 1%, LDC 0.2%). The figure was markedly higher for those experiencing repeat homelessness (11.4%).
- Increased interactions with health services preceded people becoming homeless.
- A peak in interactions with health services was seen around the time of the first homelessness assessment.

Repeat Homelessness in Moray

Table 9 shows the number of repeat homelessness cases in Moray. This figure is consistent with the number of households that claim they have unmet need from various services and they tend to float in and out of homelessness. These are the households that will be targeted for Housing First.

Table 9	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Repeat homelessness	14	31	26	13	15

Source: HL1 data

R RTP Priorities –Poverty/Health/Housing Support/Housing First/Housing Options.

Good communication is vital with any service to the public and those involved with the R RTP will ensure that all available information is provided in different formats, in a clear and concise manner, which will enable households to determine what may be available to

them. Where possible, this will include digital technologies with applicable training for those that require it. Service user consultation will also be a priority through to cases which become closed.

Poverty

- i) Given the current financial climate, and in particular energy inflation, there is a greater need than ever to improve awareness of the vulnerabilities that affect potentially homeless households and identify early intervention options to prevent homelessness. Updating and publicising what financial options are accessible will assist with the prevention of homelessness. In addition to being provided to households, this awareness will be directed at agencies who work with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This will be progressed and delivered through the North East, Highlands and Islands Homelessness Hub Group, the council's corporate training team and the new Housing Options Toolkit **(YEAR 1)**
- ii) A well trained workforce is essential to the effective delivery of Housing Options services. The Housing Options Toolkit which has been developed, provides a range of training aids to address the needs of frontline staff. Training can be carried out at a time suitable to the staff member, although some will be delivered by the council's corporate training team in consultation with service managers. Topics include homelessness legislation, tenancy sustainment, health and well-being, income and affordability and employment and training. This is aimed at improving the level and type of advice that staff can provide to households seeking housing options advice. Suitable training for applicants will enhance their employability and either assist them into employment or into better paid jobs thus reducing dependency on state benefits. **(YEAR 1-2)**

Health and Homelessness

- i) There is a need to improve awareness of the mental and physical health vulnerabilities that affect households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This awareness will be directed at services and agencies who work with households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This will be progressed and will be delivered through the North East, Highlands and Islands Homelessness Hub Group. **(YEAR 1 - 2)**
- ii) The Housing Options Team will also receive enhanced training in relation to mental and physical health vulnerabilities. This is aimed at improving their understanding of poor mental and physical health and the barriers that this can cause for households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The training will be delivered by the council's corporate training team in consultation with service managers from the MIJB. **(YEAR 1 - 2)**

- iii) There is a need to further develop a collaborate approach with Moray Integration Joint Board, Social Work and other key partners to deliver better outcomes for households at risk of homelessness and who are vulnerable due to mental or physical health. **(YEAR 2)**

Housing Support

Housing Support is a vital component in preventing homelessness and ensuring that households are able to move into permanent suitable accommodation as quickly as possible. Housing Support can be provided at varying levels (low, medium, high). When a need is identified, support staff can work with the tenant to either address the issue or ensure any situation is contained and does not deteriorate to an extent where the tenancy is at risk.

Housing First

Housing First separates the provision of housing and support and offers choice and control to tenants. The Housing First model provides ordinary, settled housing as a first response for people with complex needs. It recognises a safe and secure home as the best base for recovery and offers personalised and be-spoke support for people to end their experience of homelessness and address their wider needs. The model requires a more intensive level of support to be offered as clients generally have more severe levels of need. This can be challenging for staff and clients as there may be setbacks to progression with clients who, for example, have experienced long term abuse of alcohol or drugs. The RRTP recognises the need to enhance the service and now has 2 staff employed to work with more challenging cases. These staff work with vulnerable households at risk of homelessness (including council tenants). Part of their role is to front load support at an earlier stage to prevent homelessness where possible. Staff will be flexible in their approach to dealing with these challenges and, with the clients' agreement, increase or reduce support as the client progresses along their journey to a more settled lifestyle.

The Health and Homelessness Data Linkage study found that “around **6%** of people experiencing homelessness had evidence of all three of the following conditions – a mental health condition, a drug-related condition and an alcohol-related condition”. In Moray, this estimate would be around 10 households. They include households who live chaotic lifestyles, experience repeat homelessness and are high consumers of NHS services.

- i) Housing First commenced in June 2022 following recruitment of 2 staff. Both staff members are currently in training whilst suitable candidates for the Housing First service are being identified. **(YEAR 1)**

- ii) Once the service is operating effectively, 2 Moray Council managers will arrange a presentation to local Registered Social Landlords to advise them of the service and of the requirement for them to become involved in the provision of suitable accommodation. **(YEAR 2)**
- iii) To keep costs low and ensure properties are of a reasonable standard it is intended to use the council's housing stock for the initial Housing First allocations. There will be occasions where tenancies will have to be held past the normal void period to allow the smooth transition of more chaotic households into housing. To ensure that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is not financially disadvantaged, costs have been included within the RRTP to reduce unavoidable rent loss. These costs will focus on the average weekly rent for a 1 bedroom property, which is currently £59.73, and allow up to a 4 week delay for each of the 10 Housing First Properties. There will of course be other cases where delays will occur and the HRA will be compensated where this occurs up to the costs set out within the resources available. **(YEAR 1+)**
- iv) There will also be a small contingency per year to enable Housing First staff to provide emergency funding where necessary. This would include, but is not restricted to, electricity or gas payments where a meter has used all credit and the tenant is living in a cold house. There may also be instances where food will need to be supplied if the tenant hasn't budgeted properly or payment of minor rent arrears to avoid any further escalation. Strict guidelines will be developed to ensure that only appropriate payments are made. **(YEAR 2)**.
- v) Housing First properties will need to be furnished. CF Services Ltd and Moray Fresh Start (Third Sector Organisation) currently work with Moray Council when temporary accommodations require to be furnished or starter packs need to be provided to tenants. This has worked well to date and this arrangement will continue for those in Housing First properties. **(YEAR 1)**
- vi) Based on current assumptions, it is anticipated that a maximum of 10 Housing First properties will initially be required **(YEAR 1)**. However, managers will review Housing First on an annual basis and this will determine the number of properties that it requires annually.
- vii) Costs relating to Housing First from Year 2 to Year 4 are included in the allocated RRTP funding.

Housing Options

The Council participates in the Highlands and Islands Housing Options HUB and uses this opportunity to benchmark and share best practice on issues relating to homelessness. The HUB has previously delivered awareness training to a range of staff on issues facing homeless households and through this involvement, Officers will request that further training events are delivered specific to areas of health and vulnerability. **(YEAR 1)**

- i) The Housing Options Toolkit is now available. The Council will use this toolkit to further develop the Housing Options and Homelessness Services and carry out a thorough review in 2024/25 to maximise efficiencies. **(YEARS 1 and 3)**
- ii) The Council has protocols in place for those at risk of homelessness who are leaving the Armed Forces, Hospital and/or Prison. The Armed Forces Protocol was reviewed during 2017/18 and a revised protocol agreed from 1 September 2017. The Council and the MOD joint Services Housing Advice Office are joint signatories to the revised discharge arrangements. The Hospital Discharge Protocol was reviewed during 2018/19 and revised arrangements were agreed from 1 November 2018. The Council, NHS Grampian and the MIJB are joint signatories to the Protocol. The Prison Discharge Protocol (implemented 1 May 2012) will be updated to include SHORE standards (Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone). As part of this review, the Council will consult with key stakeholders including Scottish Prison Service, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Youth Justice, MIJB and service users. The Prison Discharge Protocol will be reviewed in 2022/23 with all others reviewed in 2023/24. **(YEARS 1 and 2).**
- iii) The RRTP will require the Council to regularly update policies and procedures relating to Housing Options and Homelessness. They will also develop a comprehensive Training Plan for Housing Options activities in consultation with the Highlands and Islands Housing Options HUB. **(YEAR 1)**

Homelessness in Moray

Table 10 shows that, apart from 2020/21, homelessness has continued at comparable levels since 2017/18. The pandemic may have played a part in 2020/21 as people had to remain in their current accommodation.

Table 10	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Homeless Assessments completed	537	572	528	455	507

Source: HL1 data

Source: HL1 data

6. Temporary Accommodation

The Council has continued to reconfigure its supply of temporary accommodation since 2010/11. It has reduced or stopped using a number of expensive units (i.e. private sector leasing, RSL accommodation, Service Family Accommodation etc.). This was to lessen the costs both for homeless households and the Council. During the pandemic lettings of local authority properties were paused for a period of time. This meant that the numbers being homeless or threatened with homelessness increased. Households who were already in temporary accommodation needed to remain there longer than would normally be the case as allocations were not being made. This meant that there was a backlog of cases to rehouse when the allocations were once again permitted. The number of cases were regularly monitored and managed which, when circumstances permitted, allowed households who had been in temporary accommodation for the longest period to be prioritised for rehousing soonest.

At 31 March 2022, the number of temporary accommodation units were reduced to 139 although the intention is to reduce this further to no more than 120 units during 2022/23. Of the 139 units, 106 were occupied with an average length of stay of 133 days. A further 33 properties (across all providers) were void of which 11 were waiting a new tenant.

The proposed reductions will be achieved by improving the re-let times for void properties from its current level of 60+ days. This will assist with keeping void loss to a minimum and allow households living in temporary accommodation to move out quicker thus reducing both the time they stay in temporary accommodation and enabling that property to be reused by another homeless household. However, care will be taken to ensure that the number of temporary accommodation units are as close to the number of households who require accommodation as possible. It should, however, be noted that we have little control over the number of void properties that may be made nor the number of households who may present themselves as homeless.

Current provision includes self-contained, dispersed temporary accommodation and supported temporary accommodation which are spread across Moray. The accommodation is mainly drawn from existing social rented stock rather than specialist supported housing facilities.

The Temporary Accommodation Working Group which comprises Housing Needs Manager, Supported Accommodation Manager, Housing Needs Operational Manager, Senior Housing Needs Officer and Operational Manager meet every 3 weeks to discuss the live cases and determine the number of temporary accommodation units required to meet statutory homelessness duties. The fit between supply of, and demand for, temporary accommodation is subject to continuous monitoring, re-assessment and reconfiguration. This flexible approach allows the Council to **minimise the cost of** temporary accommodation and ensure stock is

provided in required locations. This group has created efficiencies which has reduced the number of temporary accommodation units and the amount of time homeless applicants spend in temporary accommodation. During 2020/21 the average time spent in temporary accommodation was **152** days. This reduced to **133** days in 2021/22. The aim is to reduce this further to **110** days in 2022/23. The new Housing First staff will also focus on reducing the lengths of stay in temporary accommodation. Interestingly, Brexit had minimal impact for demand of temporary accommodation in Moray. Ukrainian refugees have, so far, been similar but there are reports of relationships between Ukrainians and hosts of 'Homes for Ukraine' breaking down in neighbouring council areas which has resulted in homeless presentations. This will be closely monitored as it may have an impact on our ability to reduce the number of temporary accommodation units. (**YEAR 1**)

Temporary accommodation units include:

Cameron Parkbrae, Elgin

This is a local authority owned, purpose built, hostel which was opened in July 1996. It is funded from General Services. It has 10 units of self-contained furnished accommodation (3 bedsits, 5 x 1 beds and 2 x 3 beds). It also has two offices. The facility is open 24/7 and incorporates the first point of contact for the Council's Out of Hours service.

St Andrews Square, Buckie

This is a purpose built hostel with 13 units of self-contained furnished accommodation. It is leased from Langstane Housing Association and opened in July 2009. It is funded from General Services and has 8 x 1 bedrooms, 5 x 2 bedrooms and 1 office.

Dispersed Properties (Council/RSL)

There are 94 Council and 14 RSL dispersed properties. These are located across Moray. The Council makes provision to rotate temporary tenancies after 3 years (or sooner if circumstances dictate). Only 78 properties are eligible for rotation.

Supported Accommodation

The Council has 19 units of supported accommodation which are all managed through 2 external housing support contracts. The funding of these comes from General Services. SACRO provide shared accommodation at Guildry House, Elgin. The remaining contract is with Moray Women's Aid who have a hostel in Elgin.

- Guildry House, Elgin

This provides 10 units of shared accommodation for single people with alcohol/substance dependency. The property is leased from Langstane Housing Association. The service is funded from General Services on a 3 year contract which is due to expire on 30 June 2022. This will be subject of a tender exercise in 2022.

- Moray Woman’s Aid, Elgin

This provides accommodation with support to women who are at risk of, or who are, fleeing domestic abuse. This is a purpose-built hostel owned by Langstane Housing Association. The building has 7 self-contained units (2 x bedsit, 3 x 2 bedrooms and 2 x 3 bedrooms). Moray Women’s Aid also lease 2 x 1 bedroom dispersed properties in the community from the Council. The contract with MWA is due to expire on 31 March 2023. This will be subject to a tender exercise in 2023.

Table 11 illustrates temporary accommodation (by type) and the number of households who were placed there in 2021/22.

Table 11 Overarching type of provision	Temporary Accommodation Type	No. of households living in the TA at 31 March 2022	Total households who have entered accommodation between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022	Total households who have left accommodation between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 (placements ending)	Estimated occupancy in the year
Emergency	5.6 Bed and breakfast	0	0	0	0
Interim	5.1 LA ordinary dwelling	73	274	360	431
	5.2 Housing association / RSL dwelling	7	42	50	57
	5.3 Hostel - local authority owned	0	4	7	7
	5.4 Hostel - RSL	0	21	75	90
	5.5 Hostel - other	15	0	0	0
	5.7 Women's refuge	4	8	7	22

	5.8 Private sector lease	0	0	0	0
Interim Total		99	349	499	607
Other	5.9 Other placed by authority	0	0	0	0
Grand Total		99	349	499	607

Source: Moray Council records

Emergency Accommodation

Bed and Breakfast accommodation is no longer used and would only be considered in a dire emergency situation. It remains the option of last resort. Legislation has also been reviewed in 2020 (Interim update of Code of Guidance Nov 2019) to further strengthen the rights of homeless persons requiring accommodation. This has put additional pressure on all local authorities when deciding the standard of accommodation and who should be accommodated in them.

As at 1 April 2022, the Council had 137 units of temporary accommodation.

7. Affordability

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) represents the maximum amount of rent that can be paid through Housing Benefit/ Universal Credit, and is determined by the household size. In Moray there are significant differences between the LHA and average market rents. LHA rates are based on rents and are limited by legislation. In Moray LHA rates have been reduced over time although they were increased by Central Government in April 2020 in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. They currently remain at their elevated level.

Table 12 compares average local private sector rents with LHA rates and shows there is a significant shortfall between the two. Where rent is higher than the LHA payable, the tenant must make up the difference from their income. The largest shortfall in percentage terms is in the 1 bedroom rate (18%) whereas in monetary terms it is the 3 and 4 bed rate at £21.16 to £23.58 which may be reflected in the higher demand for Council accommodation.

Table 12 Private Sector Rent/ LHA comparison 2021					
Property size	Median Rents Highlands and Islands 2021		LHA 2020-23	Difference per week	
	per month	per week	per week	%	£
1 bed shared rate (applicable to <35s)	£360.00	£83.07	£74.79	11	8.28
1 bedroom	£500.00	£115.38	£97.81	18	17.57
2 bedrooms	£600.00	£138.46	£126.58	9.5	11.88
3 bedrooms	£725.00	£167.30	£146.14	14.5	21.16
4 bedrooms	£900.00	£207.69	£184.11	12.8	23.58

Source: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/private-sector-rent-statistics/>

Whilst the median pay for all Scotland's employees (part time and full time) in 2021 was £14.28 per hour, according to a research briefing published in October 2021 by the Scottish Parliament (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – ASHE), Moray has the lowest average hourly rate of pay (excluding overtime) based on place of residence at £11.83. Moray is also the third lowest when assessed as place of work at £12.44. This has a negative impact on affordability for Moray's residents.

The HNDA carried out in 2017 found that only:

- 45% of households can afford lower quartile house purchase;
- Lower quartile income households could afford to buy properties priced at no more than £54,520;
- Only 50% of households can afford to rent from the open market; and
- Lower quartile income households could afford rents of not more than £65.53 per week/ £283.96 per calendar month.

However, given the current financial climate of high Consumer Price Inflation (9.1%) it is likely that the above figures will show a worsening situation when updated later this year.

Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy

The policy aims to ensure that the rent charged for temporary accommodation is affordable to all, whilst ensuring that it does not act as a disincentive to work and that rent is recovered to its maximum potential.

The specific objectives are to:

- use a cost effective and fair rent setting process,
- ensure temporary accommodation is an affordable option to all; and
- use recovery practices which take account of a household's income and their ability to pay.

The Policy states "When setting the rent level for temporary accommodation, the Council will charge every household the same level of rent, regardless of income. However, in order to ensure that temporary accommodation is an affordable option to all, the Council will only seek to recover those costs that it can reasonably be expected to collect.

The level of rent charged for temporary accommodation is set in accordance with the Local Housing Allowance, plus a £45 management fee. The management fee seeks to recover the cost of decoration, voids, electric/gas checks, deliberate damage, furnishings and floor-coverings". This is scheduled to be reviewed in 2023.

Table 13 provides details of the rent levels charged by property size:

Table 13 Temporary accommodation rents (2022 – 2023)		
Property size	Rent charged per week (including management fee)	Rent payable per week by tenants on partial Housing Benefit / not entitled to Housing Benefit (average council rent + 10%)
Single room rate for under 35 years/ Bedsit	£119.79	£48.59
1 bedroom	£142.81	£65.70
2 bedroom	£171.58	£77.14
3 bedroom	£191.14	£89.47
4 bedroom	£229.11	£113.05

Source: Moray Council records

Rent charges are reviewed as part of the Council's annual budget setting process. Annual increases in rents are influenced by the property size, the household type and capping levels imposed through Local Housing Allowance and welfare reform. Performance relating to the operation of this policy has been reported annually to the Housing and Community Safety Committee.

RRTP Priorities – Temporary Accommodation

- i) At 1 April 2019, the Council had 173 units of temporary accommodation. Three years later, that had dropped to 137 units. The Temporary Accommodation Policy allows tenancies to be rotated. It is not practical or sensible however to do this over a short period of time as it generally takes around 3 years to recoup the cost of the furniture package. There has been a practice over a number of years of 'flipping' properties. That is changing the status from a temporary accommodation unit to a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) for the person or family who currently reside in that property. This means that they do not require a move to another property and the number of temporary accommodation units reduces naturally. This, of course, only applies if the property is entirely suitable for the current occupants. During the year, numbers of temporary accommodation units can increase as demand dictates. Additional units were required during the height of the pandemic as void properties were unable to be allocated and homeless applications continued to be received but numbers have now reduced. **(YEAR 1+)**
- ii) Further reductions will continue in future years although they will fall to a level whereby it would not be wise to reduce them any further. Families with Children, Condition, Cost and length of time that a property has been used as temporary tenancy will be the main consideration when deciding which properties should be returned to mainstream let.

8. Housing Supply Target and Investment

The latest HNDA which was carried out in 2017 found that 1,179 affordable homes would be needed over 2018-2023, and that there was a significant shortfall in availability of affordable housing. The high proportion of single person homeless households resulted in significant pressure on 1 bed social rented housing, both from temporary accommodation use and as an affordable permanent housing option. The aim was to have 30% of all new build properties as 1 bedroom units. This has been achieved since the HNDA was completed in 2017 and has eased pressure for that particular group of applicants.

The 2020 Local Development Plan affordable and accessible housing policy (DP2) requires 25% of new housing developments to be "affordable" and that in the majority of cases this affordable housing is provided within the site. The affordable housing mix must be agreed with Housing as part of the planning process. The definition of what we regard as affordable is set out in Policy DP2.

Housing is routinely consulted on planning applications falling within the scope of Policy DP2 and the policy is enforced equitably and usually supported by a Section 75 agreement. The vast majority of affordable housing delivered in Moray is sourced through this policy via Section 75 agreements.

The Housing Supply Target (HST) is detailed in the LHS 2019/2024 and was subject to extensive public consultation. The HST is disaggregated to Housing Market Area (HMA) level and tenure e.g. social rent, intermediate tenures, mid-market rent or shared equity. Approximately half of Moray’s households live in the Elgin HMA and therefore approximately half of the Housing Supply Target provision has been assigned to Elgin HMA.

Scottish Government funding for affordable housing is set out and prioritised in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) which is refreshed annually and published on the Council’s website. The current level of completed and projected completions of affordable housing are presented in the table below:

Table 14 Completed and projected completions of Affordable Housing	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
No of Completions	72	102	109	193	476

Source: Moray SHIP 2022/23

The Council is one of 9 social landlords working together to supply new build properties in Moray. The Housing Business Plan of 2016 made provision for 70 units of new build housing per year until 2020/21. However, the number of affordable units delivered through the SHIP did not achieve the level required within the HNDA 2017, due to limited investment funding. A further review of the Housing Business Plan in 2019 agreed that this should be reduced to 50 units with a further review earlier this year confirming the status quo.

The Council aims to achieve an appropriate balance of supply and demand and the LHS 2019–2024 continues with this approach to social housing mix in its Housing Supply Target.

The Toolkit supplied alongside the Scottish Government’s guidance provides a statistical analysis of the shortfall in supply required to achieve rapid rehousing within 5 years. In Moray, the toolkit has identified **a shortfall of 635 lets over 5 years (127 lets per year)** to be allocated to statutorily homeless households. Current turnover of existing and new build properties fall short of that requirement.

Homeless households are significantly less likely to require sheltered and extra care housing. Also the turnover rate for sheltered/extra care housing is significantly higher than for general needs stock. Therefore, for the purposes of the RRTP, sheltered/extra care housing allocations have been separated, in an effort to accurately represent availability to homeless households.

During 2018/19 the Council allocated 46.2% of its general properties to homeless households. This increased in 2020/21 to 49.2% and again in 2021/22 to 52.6%. By comparison, RSL allocated around 53% of their general properties to homeless households in 2018/19 increasing to around 63% and 49.6% in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

How the Council allocates its housing

The Council allocates its own vacancies in accordance with its Allocations Policy from 3 separate housing lists – Waiting, Transfer and Homeless Lists. A quota system is applied to each list – Waiting (32%), Transfer (18%) and Homeless (50%). Each list allows a quota target tolerance of 5 +/- . These quotas aim to strike an appropriate balance between all needs groups and are reviewed on an annual basis. The Waiting and Transfer list applications are prioritised using a points-based system, and Homeless List applicants are rehoused chronologically. Whilst the quotas could be adjusted to increase the number of allocations to those on the Homeless list, there is a risk that the public will perceive homelessness as the only or quickest route to rehousing. This would simply encourage more homeless applications and would be counterproductive to the ethos of HARSAG. These quotas are unchanged for 2022/23 as they are still considered an acceptable balance between housing lists.

Table 15 presents the allocation quotas for 2022/23 which remain the same as 2021/22:

Table 15:	Quotas for 2022/23	Variation
Homeless List	50%	+/- 5%
Waiting List	32%	+/- 5%
Transfer List	18%	+/- 5%

Source: Council Housing Allocation Quotas – 2022/23

These quotas will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Registered Social Landlords

The Nominations Agreements for all 8 RSL's operating in Moray are currently being reviewed. In some, we are suggesting a higher percentage of re-lets be designated for nominations to reduce pressure on the Council housing lists, although this is open to negotiation. In cases of new build properties, Moray Council have agreed 100% nomination rights with some RSL's and we aim to have all RSL's sign up to this level. All RSL's will be advised in the near future of the RRTP and Housing First requirements and we will emphasise that appropriate support will continue to be provided for more complex allocations. We have a good working relationship with all RSL's and anticipate that this will continue.

9) PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

The Council works with a range of Council Services/Partners to deliver services for homeless households. The RRTP requires a new discipline with regards to the individual/collective contributions that each will make to improve the outcomes for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Moray Integration Joint Board

The MIJB is able to provide specialist support not immediately available within the Housing Service. Access to such services will be essential to help vulnerable households move into and thereafter sustain their own accommodation. The RRTP will develop an approach involving Housing and the MIJB to support the smooth transition of vulnerable households into Adult Services. This approach will include the Council's Drug and Alcohol Team and other addiction services such as Arrows. Household's eligible for long term support will include a significant proportion of Housing First cases.

Moray Fresh Start (MFS)

Moray Fresh Start currently offer starter packs for homeless households. This enables them to move earlier into their own accommodation.

Moray Food Plus

The Council works in partnership with Moray Food Plus. Food can now be accessed direct from homeless hostels. Whilst MFP do not wish to expand their service into other types of provision, they have confirmed that they could provide more food parcels if required.

Citizens Advice Bureau

The Homelessness Service provides £30k per annum to the Citizens Advice Bureau. This is to provide independent advice to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Further discussions with CAB will establish what further assistance they can provide to this client group.

Persons with no recourse to public funds

The HNDA found that “no significant increases in temporary accommodation are anticipated to meet the housing needs of refugees and/or asylum seekers.”

Historically there have been very few occasions where the Council has provided services, including temporary accommodation, to persons without recourse to public funds. Where these cases have arisen, the Council has adopted a multi-agency approach which is flexible and which provides advice and assistance, including financial assistance where required in order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the person and their household if applicable. This approach is now a requirement with accommodation being provided in the short term until a long term solution is found.

The Council recognises the need to further develop its approach to partnership working. All areas identified for development will be progressed. Costs relating to this work will be contained within existing budgets. No additional costs are being requested for these areas of development.

10) Monitoring

The RRTP’s produced by each local authority shows an innovative and new approach to dealing with homelessness. Results reported by other local authorities have been positive with high levels of tenancy sustainability. It is therefore vital that appropriate monitoring is carried out to ensure further successes and the council achieves its targets whilst also maximising efficiencies. For this to happen, monitoring will include:

1. Assessing progress on a monthly basis to ensure any targets are being met.
2. The Temporary Accommodation Working Group continuing to meet 3 weekly to assess the requirement for temporary accommodation and to discuss live cases of homelessness.

3. Continuing to reduce the number of temporary accommodation units to its optimum number.
4. Continuing to reduce the time taken by homeless applicants from the initial application to being permanently rehoused.
5. Aiming to reduce the voids re-let times.
6. Tenants housed by the Housing First process being properly supported and staff promptly addressing any issues as they arise.
7. Reviewing all Nominations Agreements with RSL's in Moray to ensure agreed quotas are being met and they buy-in to the Housing First process.
8. Continually updating the training package for staff to manage applicants who are at risk of homelessness and actively aiming to resolve the problem.
9. Improving our understanding of how poor mental or physical health can exacerbate homelessness and taking steps to address it.
10. Discussing progress at the 3 monthly RRTP meetings and addressing any shortcomings.
11. Reporting outcomes to the Housing and Community Safety Committee via the Local Housing Strategy.

Appendix II

YEAR 1 - 2022/23

Staffing			
Housing First			
Other RRTP Activities			
Action	What is in Place Already	Status/Comments	Budget
Staffing			
1 x 0.5 (fte) Homeless Projects Policy Officer (RRTP)	Post was filled in December 2021	In place	20,214
1 x Housing Support Officer (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	34,419
1 x Housing Support Worker (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	23,867
Develop an annual training programme relating to homelessness and prevention. This will be a tailored plan for each of the roles working in homelessness services.	Training is delivered in an adhoc manner. The Training Plan will focus on good practice and be mandatory for relevant staff.	Housing Policy Officer will develop the Training Plan	4,000
Housing First			
The Housing First project will provide 10 properties for clients with complex support needs. We will provide adequate furnishings for these properties (all one bedroom properties).	This is a new service endorsed for use by the Scottish Government. We plan to use our existing provider who furnishes our temporary accommodation units. (CF Furnishings).	10 x £2106 (cost per property)	21,060
Void rent loss to the HRA for properties that have been identified for use but not yet occupied.	Average weekly rent for a one bedroom property is £59.73. Costs are assessed for 10 properties anticipating a four week delay.		2,389
Other RRTP Activities			
Develop and implement a Hardship Fund specifically for Housing First clients to access. This will be administered by our Housing Support Officer with the aim of preventing homelessness again in the future.	N/a		5,000
		YEAR 1	Total £110,949

YEAR 2 - 2023/24

Action	What is in Place Already	Status/Comments	Budget
Staffing			
Housing First			
Other RRTP Activities			
Staffing			
1 x 0.5 (fte) Homeless Projects Policy Officer (RRTP)	Post was filled in December 2021	In place	20,877
1 x Housing Support Officer (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	42,401
1 x Housing Support Worker (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	29,843
Further develop and maintain training programme			4,000
Housing First			
Provide adequate furnishings for another 10 Housing First tenancies	Using our existing supplier C.F furnishings	10 x £2,211 (cost per property 5% inc from previous year)	22,110
Void rent loss to the HRA for the properties which have been identified for use but not yet occupied	Average weekly rent for a one bedroom property is £59.73. Costs are assessed for 10 properties anticipating a four week delay.		2,389
Other RRTP Activities			
Hardship Fund for Housing First clients			5,000
YEAR 2			Total £126,620

YEAR 3 - 2024/25

Staffing			
Housing First			
Other RRTP Activities			
Action	What is in Place Already	Resources Required	Budget
Staffing			
1 x 0.5 (fte) Homeless Projects Policy Officer (RRTP)	Post was filled in December 2021	In place	21,553
1 x Housing Support Officer (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	43,739
1 x Housing Support Worker (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	31,202
Further develop and maintain training programme			4,000
Housing First			
Provide adequate furnishings for another 10 Housing First tenancies	Using our existing supplier C.F furnishings	10 x £2,321 (cost per property 5% inc from previous year)	23,210
Void rent loss to the HRA for the properties which have been identified for use but not yet occupied	Average weekly rent for a one bedroom property is £59.73. Costs are assessed for 10 properties anticipating a four week delay.		2,389
Other RRTP Activities			
Hardship Fund for Housing First Clients			5,000
		YEAR 3	Total £131,093

Action	What is in Place Already	Resources Required	Budget
Staffing			
Staffing			
1 x 0.5 (fte) Homeless Projects Policy Officer (RRTP)	Post was filled in December 2021	In place	21,980
1 x Housing Support Officer (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	45,102
1 x Housing Support Worker (Housing First)	Post was filled in June 2022	In place	31,426
Further develop and maintain the training plan			4,000
Housing First			
Provide adequate furnishings for another 10 Housing First tenancies	Using our existing supplier C.F furnishings	10 x £2,437 (cost per property 5% inc from previous year)	24,370
Void rent loss to the HRA for the properties which have been identified for use but not yet occupied	Average weekly rent for a one bedroom property is £59.73. Costs are assessed for 10 properties anticipating a four week delay.		2,389
Other RRTP Activities			
Hardship Fund for Housing First clients			5,000
YEAR 4			Total £134,267

FINANCIAL SUMMARY		
YEAR 1	2022/23	£110,949
YEAR 2	2023/24	£126,620
YEAR 3	2024/25	£131,093
YEAR 4	2025/26	£134,267
Total projected spend		£502,929



**REPORT TO: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE ON 6
SEPTEMBER 2022**

SUBJECT: MORAY AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND
FINANCE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of progress on the Affordable Housing Investment Programme in Moray.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III G (10) Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the preparation and implementation of strategic housing plans.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- i) scrutinises and notes progress on the Moray Affordable Housing Investment Programme;**
- ii) scrutinises and notes progress on the delivery of the Council's new build and acquisition programme;**
- iii) considers the potential for accelerated delivery within the Council's own new build programme; and**
- iv) scrutinises and notes progress on delivery of housing at Bilbohall, Elgin.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council receives an annual resource allocation from the Scottish Government to fund the supply of new affordable housing in Moray. The Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIP) determines how this funding will be used to plan and deliver the affordable housing priorities of the Local Housing Strategy. The investment and project priorities set out in the SHIP form the basis of an annual Strategic Local Programme Agreement (SLP) between the Council and the Scottish Government. The SLP details the projects that will be funded during the year, the affordable housing

developers who will deliver them, the targets for grant expenditure and the milestones by which progress on delivery will be measured. The Council and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are the principal developers of affordable housing in Moray.

- 3.2 On 15 July 2021, the Scottish Government provided the Council with a Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) of £46.2m for 2021/22 to 2025/26.

Year	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
Moray	£10.357m	£8.927m	£8.902m	£8.933m	£9.981m	£46.200m

- 3.3 On 19 October 2021, this Committee approved the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for submission to the Scottish Government (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers).
- 3.4 On 7 December 2021, the Committee considered a report detailing the 2020/21 outturn on the Strategic Local Programme (SLP), progress on the SLP for 2021/22 and the Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) for the 2022/23 programme (paragraph 9 of the Minute refers).

MORAY STRATEGIC LOCAL PROGRAMME

- 4.1 The Scottish Government have issued the Council with a Strategic Local Programme Agreement (SLP) for 2022/23 based on the resource allocation of £8.927m. On 20 April 2022, Officers submitted a signed SLP to the Scottish Government, which detailed the use of this funding.
- 4.2 As in previous years, the Moray programme will be delivered by a combination of the Council and the RSLs, Grampian Housing Association, Cairn Housing Association, Hanover Housing Association and Osprey Housing.
- 4.3 Currently under construction

Site	Town	No of units	Landlord	Completion date (est)
Ferrylea R3 Phase 1	Forres	37	Grampian HA	Aug 2022
Village Garden, Elgin South	Elgin	25	Hanover HA	Sep 2022
Findrassie Phase 1	Elgin	28	Cairn HA	Sep 2022
Banff Road Phase 1	Keith	33	Moray Council	Dec 2022
Fyvie Green, Elgin South	Elgin	17	Moray Council	May 2023
Knockomie (R1)	Forres	28	Cairn HA	Jul 2023
Hamilton Drive	Elgin	4	Osprey	TBC
Total		172		

4.4 Site start expected during 2022/23

Site	Town	No of units	Landlord	Site start (est)
Speyview Phase 1	Aberlour	30	Moray Council	Nov 2022
Bilbohall Phase 1 (R2)	Elgin	84	Moray Council	Dec 2022
Ferrylea R3 Phase 2	Forres	43	Grampian HA	TBC
Village Green/Bain Ave	Elgin	24	Grampian HA	TBC
Total		181		

4.5 Land acquisitions expected during 2022/23

Location	Town	No of units	Vendor	completion (est)
Former Spynie Hospital site	Elgin	45	NHS Grampian	TBC
Total		45		

4.6 Open market acquisitions expected during 2022/23

Location	Town	No of units	Vendor	completion (est)
Pinegrove, Elgin	Elgin	29	MOD	Oct 2022
Springfield Drive, Elgin	Elgin	2	MOD	Oct 2022
Total		31		

4.7 The amount of More Homes Division grant has been over-committed against RPA, but this has the support of the Scottish Government as an opportunity to take advantage of programme slippage in other local authority areas and to contribute to the aims of Housing to 2040.

4.8 Officers and local development partners will continue to take steps to ensure that a sufficient pipeline of alternative development opportunities is available as a contingency against slippage. These will be mainly sites already in the programme.

4.9 Progress on programme delivery will be reported to this Committee on a biannual basis.

5. COUNCIL NEW BUILD AND ACQUISITION PROGRAMME PROGRESS

5.1 Since submission of the signed SLP in July 2021, Moray Council projects have been delayed i.e. Bilbohall, Elgin, Speyview, Aberlour and the acquisition of the former Spynie Hospital site.

Bilbohall, Elgin

5.2 Planning consent was granted for 194 units and associated shared infrastructure on 23 March 2021. The consented site is owned by Moray Council and Grampian Housing Association. In December 2021, the Council published a tender for 84 units on the Council owned site, and all the associated shared infrastructure, for the second time, with the support of hub North Scotland Ltd acting as employers agent. This has resulted in the appointment of Ogilvie Construction as preferred developer. Detailed cost negotiations are underway, with the ultimate aim of agreeing a fixed price,

Design and Build contract which is acceptable to all parties. Officers anticipate this will take some months, but also anticipate that construction could begin by the end of 2022.

Banff Road, Keith Phase 1

- 5.3 There is a known risk of radon gas in the Keith area, and this has been investigated through the statutory consenting processes for the Banff Road site, where the Building Warrant required Radon mitigations to be included in the construction, i.e. impermeable membrane to the floor slab with appropriate seals at foundation entry points e.g. drains and other services. During super-structure construction, Springfield Properties identified flaws in these seals. This resulted in a small risk of radon gas emissions entering some of the houses. Nevertheless, Springfield Properties have begun to fit remediation measures to all 33 properties. This will involve additional mechanical ventilation at below-floor level, powered by an independent electrical supply, separate to all the housing, paid for, and subject to regular inspection by Springfield Properties at their expense on an ongoing basis. These measures will be subject to further Building Warrant approval, which includes a 90 day testing period. The properties cannot be occupied until a Completion Certificate has been issued by Moray Council.
- 5.4 The design and installation of the remedial solution has resulted in a substantial delay in handover, from March to December 2022.

Speyview, Aberlour Phase 1

- 5.5 Moray Council acquired the land, with the support of Scottish Government funding, from Springfield Properties in March 2022. There have been protracted negotiations with Springfield Properties over the development costs, in the context of current volatility in construction industry costs, and also infrastructure difficulties on the site. The purchase was subject to a 1 year buy back agreement. Officers anticipate contractual agreement and site start by autumn 2022.

HRA Business Plan and Prudential Borrowing

- 5.6 Following review of the Housing Business Plan in February 2022, the Council agreed that 50 council houses will be built per annum.
- 5.7 The timing of the delivery of new Council housing will be within the capacity for prudential borrowing, taking cognisance of the HRA Business Plan assumptions. As a consequence, it may be necessary to landbank sites and/or delay site starts based on the HRA prudential borrowing position. Current examples where landbanking may be required are Banff Road, Keith (Phases 2/3), former Spynie Hospital, Elgin.
- 5.8 The forward programme will be informed by the ongoing rent restructuring project, with progress expected to be reported to Committee in Autumn 2022.

Accelerated delivery programme

- 5.9 In anticipation of increased demand for social housing from refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan, officers have prepared options for an accelerated programme of delivery of new build Council housing, in consultation with our Accountancy colleagues. There could be potential to bring these projects forward to achieve early completion.

Site	Town	No of units	Landlord	Site start (est)
Banff Road, Keith Phase 2	Keith	42	Moray Council	Jan 23
Buckie R8 Barhill Road Phase 1	Buckie	25	Moray Council	Apr 23
Speyview, Aberlour Phase 2	Aberlour	20	Moray Council	Dec 23
Total		87		

Acquisition programme

- 5.10 The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) provides facility to purchase properties from the open market for provision of affordable housing, where strategic and value for money criteria have been met.
- 5.11 Officers are investigating the potential for purchasing properties from the open market in an effort increase supply. Officers have entered into negotiations with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation with a view to purchasing surplus RAF married quarters at Pinegrove and Springfield Drive, Elgin, totalling 31 properties.
- 5.12 This activity has the support of the Scottish Government and will be reflected in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) to be considered by this Committee later in 2022.

6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Addressing the shortage of affordable housing in Moray is a key priority of the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan, the Council's Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and the Housing and Property Service Plan. The Strategic Local Programme reflects priorities for investment in the provision of new affordable housing to meet need identified in the Local Housing Strategy.

The affordable housing programme supports the aims of the 10 Year Plan by providing new affordable housing for an increasing population and a growing and diversifying economy. The target of 50 Council house completions per annum will be delivered within the investment planning and funding framework provided by the programme.

(b) Policy and Legal

The affordable housing supply programme contributes to meeting the Council's statutory duties to address homelessness and meet housing need in Moray.

(c) Financial implications

The report provides details of the resources being made available by the Scottish Government to fund affordable housing in Moray. The Council has agreed that 50 new council houses will be built per annum. The current HRA Business Plan has made provision for the level of borrowing required to fund the Council's housebuilding programme. Any acceleration of the programme may lead to a higher level of borrowing than anticipated in the business plan and therefore reach thresholds

earlier than anticipated. Dialogue has taken place with finance regarding the approach to managing this and modelling of implications and consideration of mitigations will take place to inform any decision to bring forward developments.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no specific risks arising from this report, however the programme may be impacted by economic and market conditions and site specific issues as developments proceed. In particular, the increase in interest rates will impact on the cost of borrowing. There are processes in place to manage these risks and mitigations considered.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property

The report details the ongoing programme for development of additional affordable housing in Moray in response to strategic needs and specifically the Council new build programme to increase the Council's own supply of affordable housing.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The housing needs of equalities groups are identified in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The Moray Affordable Housing Programme seeks to deliver the housing priorities contained in the LHS.

(h) Consultations

This report has been subject to consultation with the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), the Head of Housing and Property, Georgina Anderson (Legal Services Senior Solicitor), the Property Asset Manager, the Head of Economic Growth and Development, the Strategic Planning and Development Manager, the Chief Financial Officer and Lindsey Robinson, Committee Services Officer.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The report provides details of an update on the current and future affordable housing investment programme. The report also provides an update on the Council's own new build and acquisition programme, including an update on procurement of housing at Bilbohall, Elgin, and information on the potential for an accelerated Council programme of delivery through 2022/23.

Author of Report: Fiona Geddes, Acting Housing Strategy and Development Manager
Background Papers: with author
Ref: SPMAN-1285234812-1147



**REPORT TO: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE ON 6
SEPTEMBER 2022**

**SUBJECT: HOUSING MANAGEMENT REVIEW AND SERVICE
DEVELOPMENTS**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND
FINANCE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides progress on the review of Housing Management, includes recommendations for service developments which arise from it and provides an overview of service developments within the 2022/23 budget.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (G) (3 &4) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the management and maintenance of the council's Housing Stock including housing for the homeless and sites for Gypsies/Travellers, and the allocation and letting of houses.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) notes the progress of reviewing the Housing Management structure and resources;**
- (ii) agrees that the budget set aside for a Housing Inspector post is amended to recruit 1 FTE mainstream Housing Officer instead;**
- (iii) agrees to the addition of a further 1 FTE Area Housing Manager and 2.1 FTE Housing Officers to the Housing Management structure;**
- (iv) notes the overview of the service developments within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2022/23 as detailed in paragraph 5.2.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Housing Management service delivers key aspects of the Council's landlord role – tenancy management, estate management, rent collection and arrears management.

- 3.2 On 12 February 2015, The Moray Council approved the Housing Revenue Budget for 2015/16 (Paragraph 6 of the minute refers). A number of service developments were included within the budget to help respond to changes arising from welfare reform, improving neighbour disputes/anti-social behaviour performance and void management performance.
- 3.3 During October 2015, a Change Management Plan (CMP) was implemented and the housing officer's role became less generic and more specialised. The main characteristics were to support tenants to pay their rent given the impending roll out of Universal Credit, provide high quality "person centred" services; improve neighbourhoods and deliver better outcomes for the people of Moray. The responsibility for dealing with neighbour disputes/antisocial behaviour and certain void management practices were removed from the Housing Officer.
- 3.4 The Council currently has two Area Housing Teams (East & West) comprising of 26.9 FTE members of staff, including two Housing Managers and 13.4 Area Housing Officers. The other posts are an Unauthorised Encampment Officer, an Estate Co-ordinator, 4 Estate Caretakers and 5.5 clerical assistants.
- 3.5 The complement of Housing Officers remains at 2015 levels, which is low in comparison to other Councils and over 300 additional properties have since been added to the Council's stock through the New Build programme. As at 31 March 2015, Moray Council owned 5,990 properties and this had increased to 6297 properties by 31 March 2022 meaning the average patch size for a Housing Officers is 485 properties. The Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) approved by Housing and Community Safety Committee on 19 October 2021 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers), makes provision for 50 additional Council house completions per year from 2022/23 - 2026/27, subject to capacity within the Business Plan. This means the size of Housing Officer's patches will continue to grow as stock is added through the New Build programme.
- 3.6 On 27 September 2017, Moray Council approved a confidential report reviewing the Housing Management service staffing structure (Paragraph 19 of the minute refers). This resulted in two Senior Housing Officer posts (Grade 9) being deleted from the structure. This reduced operational management resource by half.
- 3.7 On 27 August 2019, Communities Committee agreed a recommendation to investigate the addition of a new Housing Inspector post (Paragraph 13 of the minute refers) to address the poor property condition of some council tenancies. A further report was to be presented to a future Committee setting out the full scope of any new job description and budget provision was made for a post at the same level as the Housing Officer. The further report did not proceed due to workload pressures and the subsequent Coronavirus Pandemic.
- 3.8 In April 2021, a further change management plan resulted in the Area Housing Managers taking over the management of 5.5 FTE clerical staff as part of the decentralisation of the Housing Central Administration Team.

- 3.9 On 22 February 2022, Moray Council approved the Housing Revenue Budget for 2022/23 (Paragraph 5 of the minute refers). Service developments of up to £456k were included within the budget to help respond to several emerging priorities and areas of pressure, which included Housing Management.
- 3.10 On 22 March 2022, the Housing and Community Safety Committee approved service developments of £47,799 (Paragraph 9 of the minute refers) which included an additional 0.4 FTE Housing Officer at a cost of £18,506 to alleviate operational pressures pending a wider review of staffing levels in the course of the year.
- 3.11 On 22 March 2022, the Housing and Property Service Plan 2022/23 (Paragraph 6 of the minute refers) was approved by Housing and Community Safety Committee and contained an action to review the performance and resources within the Housing Management structure in line with the increasing stock levels and challenging operating environment (i.e. Impact of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, Housing First, Coronavirus Pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis).
- 3.12 Consultations have taken place with recognised Trade Unions making them aware of the service intention to have open and transparent discussions with their members regarding a review of the performance and resources within the Housing Management structure. The Trade Unions welcomed the review and the involvement of their members in its considerations.
- 3.13 Service Management have undertaken performance and resource reviews with Housing Officers to identify areas which are challenging and to identify potential solutions. On 19 August 2022, a Housing Management Workshop took place with Housing Officers to discuss the proposed service developments and listen to their views and suggestions. A mop up session took place the following week for those not able to attend. The proposal set out in Section 4 of this report took account of staff comments.

4. Proposed Service Improvement

- 4.1 Since the implementation of the CMP in 2015, there have been a number of factors impacting on performance and the effectiveness of the Housing Management service. Welfare Reform and the Coronavirus Pandemic have had a detrimental impact on rent collection. Although the Council remains in the top quartile for rent collection when compared with our peers there is a rising trend in rent arrears that needs to be addressed. Rent arrears stood at £330k when the CMP was implemented in October 2015 and it has now increased to £785k as at 15 August 2022. Any significant increase in rent arrears will impact the Housing and Revenue Account Business Plan and the ability to provide new council housing and upgrade its existing housing stock.
- 4.2 The Council is now housing more vulnerable people with some having multiple and complex needs. This requires more intensive support and time from Housing Officers when dealing with tenants. The implementation of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and Housing First has placed additional pressures on staff resources. Housing Officers engage with tenants through a number of platforms but face to face contact continues to be the most

effective approach when dealing with vulnerable tenants but it can be time consuming.

- 4.3 In reviewing the Housing Management structure, officers have recognised the need for additional management capacity to proactively manage the larger teams and for additional housing officers to reduce the average 'patch size' from its current high level. It is proposed to add a further Area Housing Manager to the structure to enable additional focus on performance management and facilitate a more proactive approach to service delivery.
- 4.4 There is consensus within the team not to proceed with the specialist Housing Inspector post detailed at paragraph 3.7 above, but to recruit an additional mainstream housing officer instead. If the overarching proposal is accepted and patch sizes are reduced, Housing Officers feel they would have the time to address council tenancies in poor property condition if appropriate guidance/procedures are developed, as well as undertaking a broader range of duties to improve performance and customer service. The budget for this post is already set aside in the Housing Revenue Account. The £456k identified for service developments in the Housing Revenue Budget for 2022/23 included provision for a further two Housing Officer posts, which it is proposed to augment by a further 0.1 FTE for both additional capacity in order for ease of recruiting the an existing 0.4 FTE vacancy which had previously been approved. There is sufficient budget remaining provision available for the additional £4,626 annual (£2,313 in-year) requirement.

Previously Proposed/Approved Posts	Grade	Committee
1 FTE x Housing Inspector	8	Communities, August 2019
0.4 FTE Area Housing Officer	7/8	Housing & Community Safety, March 2022

- 4.5 It is therefore proposed that the number of Housing Officers across Moray is increased by 3.5 FTE from 13 FTE to 16.5 FTE, inclusive of the previously proposed Housing Inspector role and approval for 0.4 FTE role approved by committee in March 2022, which have yet to be recruited to. This equates to a proposed 27% increase in Housing Officers to reflect the increase in stock levels through the Council's New Build Programme and the challenging operational context. This would reduce average patch sizes from 485 to 382 properties and allow Housing Officers to become more proactive. There is no national data on housing officer patch sizes but a few examples are Glasgow Housing Association (200 properties), Fife Council (250 properties) and West Dunbartonshire (300 properties). Organisations with lower patch sizes typically have fully generic housing officers whilst larger patch sizes will have more specialist officers carrying out a lesser degree of housing management functions. Reducing patch sizes will provide officers with more time to address rent arrears and support vulnerable customers e.g. the cost of living crisis and increase in energy costs is presenting a significant challenge to some of our tenants. Housing Officers would also have time to collaborate with tenants to enhance the condition of council estates which have definitely deteriorated during the pandemic. This would reduce the number of complaints and enquires that elected members receive about the condition of estates.

Proposed Service Development	Grade	Committee
1 FTE x Area Housing Manager	10	New proposal arising from the service review
3.5 FTE Area Housing Officer	7/8	Inclusive of 1.4 FTE roles detailed in table beneath para. 4.4

- 4.6 The proposed service development is intended to maintain the Council's position as a good performing social landlord by
- providing high quality customer services to our tenants;
 - increasing staff morale by reducing workload pressures and minimising staff absence;
 - protecting the Housing Revenue Account from emerging risks.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS & SUMMARY OF HRA SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2022/23

5.1 The total annual equivalent cost of the Housing Management review proposals for the Housing Revenue Account would be £177, 681, which requires £79,587 budget for 2022/23. The previously earmarked budget of £46,264 (annual) is also drawn down in lieu of the Housing Inspector post, which this year will equate to £23,132 spend.

5.2 Following agreement of the HRA budget for provision of £456k for the year 2022/23, a number of proposals have been approved or proposals are being taken to this committee for approval. A summary is provided below:

Service Developments - budget 2022/23	Committee Approval (2022)	Full Year Equivalent	2022/23 Budget provision
Tenant Participation post & ancillary costs	March (paragraph 9 of the minute refers)	51,544	20,701
Housing Management resource	March (paragraph 9 of the minute refers)	18,506	9,253
Property Asset Manager recharge	March (paragraph 9 of the minute refers)	29,293	29,293
Policy, Compliance & Systems	June (paragraph 6 of the minute refers)	92,528	30,946
Housing Investment proposal	September (item 7 on the agenda)	174,130	72,555
Allocations resource proposal	September	46,264	23,132

	(item 8 on the agenda)		
Repairs & Maintenance proposal	September (item 12 on the agenda)	74,264	30,000
Housing Management proposal	September (item 10 on the agenda)	159,175	79,587
Total cost		645,704	295,467
2022/23 budget/remaining		456,296	160,829

5.3 The above table summarises what is expected to be the final position in terms of service developments arising from the 2022/23 budget. These incorporate some non-recurring spends and where applicable staffing provision for the second half of the budget year (from October 2022), therefore the full year equivalent figure varies from the budgeted amount and will inform the baseline for 2023/24 as required. Actual outturn is expected to be a higher underspend than the remaining £161k provision, with lead-in time for evaluations and recruitment likely to be greater for some of the posts established.

6. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The provision of new affordable housing, the maintenance of the Council's housing stock and dealing with homelessness are priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, the Council's Local Housing Strategy, the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and the Housing and Property Service Plan.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

There are no policy or legal implications arising from this report.

(c) **Financial implications**

The financial implications associated within this report are set out in Section 5 of the report. Provision for a Grade 7/8 officer had already been budgeted for and the service developments incorporated within the 2022/23 HRA budget allow for the additional expenditure. In practice the additional posts will come into the service halfway through the year, therefore the full year provision is double the anticipated spend within this financial year.

(d) **Risk Implications**

Failure to address the capacity issues identified within the Housing Management service will limit operational effectiveness and risk an increase in rent arrears, which would impact on the Council's ability to provide new housing and upgrade its existing housing stock.

(e) **Staffing Implications**

Approval of the service development will result in the recruitment of 1.0 FTE Area Housing Manager (Grade 10) and 3.1 FTE Housing Officers (Grade 7/8).

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities/socio economic impacts arising from this report.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no climate change/biodiversity impacts arising from this report.

(i) Consultations

Consultation on this report has taken place with Edward Thomas (Head of Housing and Property), Housing Management staff, Grant Cruickshank (HR Manager), Georgina Anderson (Legal Services Senior Solicitor), Lorraine Paisey (Chief Finance Officer) and Lindsey Robinson (Committee Services Officer).

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This report provides Committee with progress on a Housing Management service development. It seeks approval for a proposal to recruit an additional Area Housing Manager, 2.1 FTE Area Housing Officers and agrees to a Housing Inspector post previously budgeted for being changed to a mainstream Housing Officer.**

Author of Report: David Munro, Housing Service Manager

Background Papers:

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